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HIMACHAL'S NEW CM

Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu takes oath

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Reining in troublesome elephants

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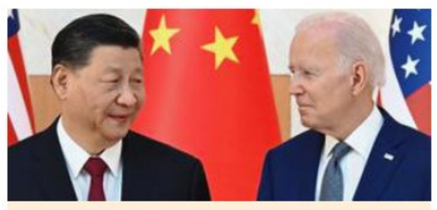

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Beijing as the principal contradiction for India

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Giroud powers France past dogged England

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India urged to adopt ASEAN consensus on Myanmar

Suhasini Haidar
BALI

India and other countries should "respect" and follow the ASEAN's policy on Myanmar rather than taking a "different" path, Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi says.

In comments to *The Hindu* about India's decision to engage the Myanmar military government that came to power in February 2021 after deposing the elected National Unity Government and jailing thousands of leaders, including Aung San Suu Kyi, Ms. Marsudi said that it could make efforts of the 10-member Association of South East Asian Nations towards democracy "less effective".

Instead, she urged India and other countries to follow the ASEAN "five point consensus".

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 8

Stop grading terrorists as good and bad: India in UN

Political convenience must not dictate such decisions and there cannot be an exception or justification for any act of terrorism, the country says in a concept note for the Security Council

Press Trust of India
UNITED NATIONS

The era of classifying terrorists as "bad" or "good" on the basis of "political convenience" must end immediately, a concept note circulated by India in the UN Security Council here has said, underlining that categorising terror acts by intent as religious or ideologically motivated will dilute the shared global commitment to fighting terrorism.

Stressing that terrorism cannot be associated with any religion, nationality, civilisation or ethnic group, the note said all acts of terrorism were criminal. "Terrorism in all its forms and manifestations must be condemned. There cannot be an exception or justification for any act of terrorism, regardless of its motivation and wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed. The era of classifying terrorists as 'bad', 'not so bad' or 'good' on the basis of political convenience must end immediately," it said.

> Terrorism in all its forms and manifestations must be condemned. There cannot be an exception or justification for any act of terrorism, regardless of its motivation and wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed
>
> **CONCEPT NOTE CIRCULATED BY INDIA IN UN SECURITY COUNCIL**

Ruchira Kamboj, India's Permanent Representative to the UN

India, the current President of the 15-nation Council, will hold two signature events on reformed multilateralism and counter-terrorism to be chaired by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Wednesday and Thursday.

India proposes to organise a briefing of the Security Council on Thursday on "Global counter-terrorism approach – principles and the way forward" under the "Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts". Ahead of the meeting, India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ruchira Kamboj, in a letter to Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, asked that a concept note intended to guide the discussions on the topic be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

"The terrorist attacks in New York on September 11, 2001 were a turning point in the global approach to counter-terrorism. Since then, London, Mumbai, Paris, many parts of West Asia and Africa have also experienced terrorist attacks," the concept note last week said. It added that these attacks highlight that the threat of terrorism is universal and that terrorism in one part seriously impacts peace and security elsewhere.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 8

CBI quizzes Kavitha in Delhi liquor policy case for over 7 hours

BRS leader K. Kavitha coming out from her residence in Hyderabad after questioning by the CBI on Sunday. G. RAMAKRISHNA

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

The Central Bureau of Investigation questioned Bharat Rashtra Samithi MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha, daughter of Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao, in connection with the Delhi liquor policy case, for nearly seven-and-a-half hours on Sunday.

Ms. Kavitha was questioned at her Banjara Hills residence here from 11 a.m till about 6.30 p.m, by a team of officials from Delhi, led by Deputy Inspector-General Raghavendra Vatsa and a woman officer.

Soon after the officials left, Ms. Kavitha walked out of her residence and greeted BRS activists gathered there. She then left for Pragati Bhavan to meet her father. Neither Ms. Kavitha nor the CBI disclosed any information over the day's developments.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 8

NEARBY

No bidders for smart parking tenders

BENGALURU
After implementing the smart parking system on 10 roads in the Central Business District (CBD), the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike has now failed to draw any bidders for the system planned for all eight zones. » Page 2

Expressway pushes up land prices

BENGALURU
The newly-built Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway has pushed up land prices along its stretches in both villages and towns. » Page 3

EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGE 3

Kharge summons State Congress leaders to Delhi for a meeting today

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

With Karnataka going to the polls in less than six months, newly elected All-India Congress Committee president M. Mallikarjun Kharge has summoned State party leaders for talks on election strategies, in Delhi on Monday.

The meeting comes close on the heels of Mr. Kharge, on Saturday, asking all leaders to put up a united fight and leave the task of picking the Chief Minister to the high command, in what is being seen as a stern message to the factions of Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly Siddaramaiah and KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar, who are eyeing for the Chief Minister's post.

Besides the two senior leaders, party sources said that most of the top rung leaders have been asked to attend the meeting in which AICC general secretary in charge of Karnataka, Randeep Singh Surjewala, and senior party leader K.C. Venugopal will also be participating. Leaders are expected to discuss the current political atmosphere in the State, and also about including interested leaders from other parties into Congress, they said. "While strategies will be prominently discussed, the issue of leadership tussle is also likely to figure in the meeting. Leaders may discuss candidates' selection also in the light of several constituencies witnessing intense fight for party ticket and aspirants knocking on the doors of local leaders for it," the sources said.

M. Mallikarjun Kharge. FILE PHOTO

"Most importantly, efforts will also be made to draw peace between Mr. Siddaramaiah and Mr. Shivakumar," they added.

It may be noted that differences between Mr. Siddaramaiah and Mr. Shivakumar have come to the fore on various occasions of late. In fact, supporters of the two leaders have been publicly projecting them as the next Chief Minister. Such differenes between the two top leaders has become a cause of concern for the party high command.

There is also a feeling in the party State unit that the differences between them may turn the process of selection of candidates a tough task ahead of the polls. Among those summoned for meeting include are all the five working presidents, campaign committee chairman M.B. Patil, and senior leaders.

RELATED REPORT » PAGE 4

Revamp on the cards for iconic *thindi beedhi*

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

From piping hot bajjis to Congress buns, the city's 'thindi beedhi' holds a special place in most Bengalureans' hearts.

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has now come forward to remodel and redevelop the iconic V.V. Puram food street.

The food street in Visveswarapuram (VV Puram), situated near Sajjan Rao circle close to Gandhi Bazaar, lacks modern amenities and the narrow but crowded street is not capable of handling the huge number of crowds and vehicles it attracts. Over 20 food stalls spread over less than 150 metres here serve a variety of south Indian, north Indian and Chinese delicacies to customers.

The food street in Visveswarapuram lacks modern amenities and is narrow and crowded. K. MURALI KUMAR

According to BBMP officials, the stretch is crowded, especially after 6 p.m., leading to heavy traffic snarls. There is also a lack of modern amenities. "There were requests by the vendors in V.V. Puram that the street has to be renovated with modern facilities since the stretch is always crowded and lacks basic amenities. The BBMP has planned to redevelop the whole stretch similar to the recently renovated Commercial Street in the city," said Jayaram Raipura, Zonal Commissioner of BBMP South Zone.

The BBMP will upgrade the infrastructure at a cost of around ₹ 5 crore and the work may start this month. "The whole food street will be redeveloped with modern facilities within six months and work for the same will be started this month," Mr. Raipura added.

A blueprint has also been prepared to revamp the food street where, according to civic body officials, colourful tiles and cobblestones will be paved on roads and pavements, dedicated sitting areas for customers will be set up and the stretch will be pedestrian-friendly.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 2

2 policemen suspended for harassing couple and extorting ₹1,000

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Deputy Commissioner of Police, North East division, on Sunday suspended a head constable and a constable attached to the Sampigehalli police station Hoysala patrolling duty for allegedly harassing a couple late at night and extorting ₹1,000 from them.

Narrates ordeal

The incident went viral after the victim, identified as Karthik Patri, put out a tweet narrating the ordeal, prompting the DCP to probe the matter and suspend Head Constable Rajesh and Constable Nagesh, pending inquiry for further action.

Tagging the city Police Commissioner in his social media post, the victim alleged that the duo confronted the couple while they were walking home from a party near Manyata Tech Park and forced them to pay ₹1,000 through the PayTm app for "breaking the law" by walking on the streets near their home after 11 p.m.

The policemen allegedly said walking on the street during the late hours was not allowed. The couple was walking home from a birthday event.

Phones seized

The policemen allegedly harassed the couple demanding ID cards and seized their phones.

They asked that they pay a penalty of ₹3,000 or face legal action.

SDMC reverses fortunes of Tirthahalli school

In 2009, the Govt. Urdu Higher Primary School was on the verge of closure as it had only four students. At that time, a new team took over the SDMC, well prepared to face the challenges of achieving the goal of strengthening the school

Sathish G.T.
TIRTHAHALLI (SHIVAMOGGA DISTRICT)

The Government Urdu Higher Primary School in Tirthahalli taluk, which was once on the verge of closure with only four students, has become one of the schools with the highest student strength, thanks to the active participation of parents and residents of this town in the Malnad region of Karnataka.

Now, the Government Urdu/English Medium Higher Education School in Tirthahalli, Shivamogga district, has over 220 students.

In 2009, the school had only four students, but five teachers. There were reports that it could be closed any time. At that time, a new team took over the School Development and Monitoring Committee (SDMC), well-prepared to face the challenges of achieving the goal of strengthening the school.

Initially, they introduced education in English medium, besides beginning pre-primary classes (LKG & UKG).

"As we started to provide education in English medium, parents who had sent their children to private schools paying high fees, started to look at our school," said Parvez Ahmed, president of the SDMC, who was then a member of the committee.

The old building was decades old. There were chances of some portions of the structure collapsing. With the help of former Education Minister Kimmane Ratnakar, who had represented Thirthahalli in the legislative Assembly, the SDMC got ₹50 lakhs for a new building. Tanvir Sait, another former Education Minister, arranged for a grant of another ₹25 lakh. Home Minister Araga Jnanendra, who now represents the constituency, helped the school with a grant of ₹21 lakh. Besides government funds, the committee managed to raise over ₹20 lakh.

A non-government organisation Peace Welfare Trust, which includes some members of the SDMC, contributed funds and infrastructure for the school. Students from class 1 to 7 get midday meals from the government. CCTV cameras have been installed in the corridors and classrooms. A computer laboratory has been set up.

The SDMC pays salaries to guest teachers and helpers. "We collect a nominal fee from parents who can afford the same, and we bear the rest of the expenses," said SDMC president Parvez Ahmed.

Now, the school has 222 students, including 58 in pre-primary classes, and 15 staff members comprising four regular teachers appointed by the State government, eight guest teachers appointed by the SDMC, and three helpers.

The school insists that students speak only in Kannada or English on the campus.

"Students with Urdu as their mother tongue hardly get a chance to speak in Kannada at home. We do not wish our students to lack in Kannada proficiency. Hence, we discourage students from speaking in Urdu on the campus, except in Urdu language class," said the SDMC president.

The active participation of the SDMC over the years has motivated the staff.

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

A rise in the average wholesale price of wheat this year

22 The percentage by which the average wholesale price of wheat rose across India to ₹2,721 per quintal in November from ₹2,228 per quintal in January this year. Wheat production has declined from 109.59 million tonnes in 2020-21 to 106.84 million tonnes in 2021-22 due to heat wave in March and April, according to agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar. PTI

Cancer cases expected to rise, says Minister citing official data

13.92 In lakh, is the number of cancer cases recorded in India in 2020. The number is expected to increase by 12.8%, according to Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya who cited National Cancer Registry Programme data. Replying to a question, Mr.Mandaviya said patients with cancer are getting treatment at various health facilities. PTI

DGCA issued over 1000 commercial pilot licences this year

1,081 The number of commercial pilot licences (CPL) aviation regulator DGCA issued in 2022, the highest for any year in the last one decade, according to official data. A pilot's training, including flying training, is estimated to cost up to ₹50 lakh before he or she applies for the CPL. DGCA has issued more than 25,000 pilot licences till now. PTI

Teachers' Eligibility Test conducted after a gap of five years

7 In lakh, the number of candidates who appeared for the Teachers' Eligibility Test in West Bengal to fill up 11,000 vacancies for primary teacher posts in government-sponsored and aided schools. The TET is being held after a gap of five years amid tight security measures. The 2014 TET results are mired in controversy over alleged irregularities in the recruitment process. PTI

Report by ADR finds new MLAs facing criminal charges

40 The number of newly elected MLAs who are facing criminal charges, according to the Association for Democratic Reforms and the Gujarat Election Watch. Of the 40 MLAs, 29 members are facing serious criminal cases. Among the 29, 20 belong to BJP, Congress (4), Aam Aadmi (2), Independents (2), and Samajwadi Party (1). PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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On amending the cooperative societies Act

What are the various changes in the the Multi-State Cooperative Societies (Amendment) Bill, 2022? Will it undermine the authority of the States? Why are Opposition parties rallying against the Bill? What are the concerns regarding the functioning of cooperatives in the country?

EXPLAINER

Diksha Munjal

The story so far:
The Bill to amend the Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act, 2002, was introduced in the Lok Sabha on December 7. Opposition parliamentarians alleged that the Bill's provisions encroached upon the rights of State governments, demanding that it be referred to a Standing Committee.

What are multi-State cooperatives?
According to the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), cooperatives are people-centred enterprises jointly owned and democratically controlled by and for their members to realise common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations. Multi-State cooperatives are societies that have operations in more than one State – for instance, a farmer-producers organisation which procures grains from farmers from multiple States. The board of directors are from all the States these collectives operate in and control all the finances and administration. There are close to 1,500 MSCSs registered in India with the highest number being in Maharashtra.

What are the issues with the cooperative sector?
The independent and autonomous character of cooperative societies was to be crucial in their functioning. However, H.S. Shylendra, professor at the Institute of Rural Management, Anand (IRMA) points out in a 2021 paper that the inclusion of cooperatives in the planning process as development instruments made the sector an avenue for dispensing patronage to the supporters of ruling political parties. Moreover, the policy of State governments to contribute to the share capital of the cooperatives enabled governments, "in the name of public interest" to directly intervene in the working of cooperatives which are legally autonomous. Notably, the potency of cooperatives as an apparatus of political control can be seen in States such as Maharashtra, Kerala, Gujarat, parts of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal. Besides, MSCSs were formed to ease the operation of collectives throughout the country. On the contrary, IRMA researcher Indranil De points out that in spite of their potential, MSCSs are facing issues regarding trust, which is the very basis of cooperation. This has brought MSCSs under multiple controls from the Centre. Monitoring is one of the important institutional functions in a collective organisation but if monitored from much above, it takes a top-down approach as opposed to a grassroots one. In 1991, the Choudhary Brahm Perkash Committee of the planning commission made far-reaching recommendations to reorganise multi-State cooperatives but researchers point out how the Act has not been modified as per the report.

Collective strength: An Amul dairy processing unit in Gujarat. VIJAY SONEJI

What does the Bill seek to change?
To plug the "loopholes" in the MSCS Act, the Centre introduced a Bill seeking to amend the 2002 law for more "transparency" and "ease of doing business". The amendments have been introduced to improve governance, reform the electoral process, strengthen monitoring mechanisms and enhance transparency and accountability. The Bill also seeks to improve the composition of the board and ensure financial discipline, besides enabling the raising of funds in multi-State cooperative societies.

The Bill provides for the creation of a central Co-operative Election Authority to supervise the electoral functions of the MSCSs. The Authority will have a chairperson, vice-chairperson, and up to three members appointed by the Centre. Objecting these amendments, Congress MP Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said in Parliament that the Bill may lead to "the concentration of power of the Centre", which could impact the "autonomy" of MSCSs and create potential for "misuse". Notably, the constitutional domain of States in regulating cooperative societies was upheld by the Supreme Court last year when it struck down a part of the 97th Constitution Amendment.

It also envisages the creation of a Co-operative Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Development Fund for the revival of sick multi-State co-operatives societies. This fund shall be financed by existing profitable multi-State co-operative societies which will have to deposit either ₹1 crore or 1% of the net profit into the Fund. Congress MP Manish Tewari pointed out that this would put an additional burden on MSCSs.

In order to make the governance of multi-State cooperative societies more democratic, the Bill has provisions for appointing a Cooperative Information Officer and a Cooperative Ombudsman. To promote equity and facilitate inclusiveness, provisions relating to the representation of women and Scheduled Caste/Tribe members on the boards of multi-State cooperative societies have also been included.

THE GIST

- The Bill to amend the Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act, 2002, was introduced in the Lok Sabha on December 7.
- Multi-State cooperatives are societies that have operations in more than one State — for instance, a farmer-producers organisation which procures grains from farmers of multiple States.
- The amendments have been introduced to improve governance, reform the electoral process, strengthen monitoring mechanisms and enhance transparency and accountability. The Bill also seeks to improve the composition of the board and ensure financial discipline, besides enabling the raising of funds in multi-State cooperative societies.

What are the existing laws on religious conversions?

Which all States have passed legislations against forceful conversions? Have these laws been challenged on the grounds of being 'unconstitutional'?

Diksha Munjal

The story so far:
On December 5, a Bench led by Justice M.R. Shah said acts of charity or good work to help a community or the poor should not cloak an intention to religiously convert them as payback.

Do States have laws on conversions?
In post-independent India, Odisha became the first State to enact a law restricting religious conversions, which later became a model framework for other States. Odisha's 1967 Act provides that no person shall directly or indirectly convert any person from one religious faith to another by force, inducement or any fraudulent means. Later, Madhya Pradesh brought in the Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swatantraya Adhiniyam (1968). This Act added a provision distinct from the Odisha law, requiring whoever converted any person, to intimate the District Magistrate that such a conversion had taken place. Failure to do so would attract punishment and fines. Subsequent Acts in other States over the past two decades see identical provisions.

These laws also provide for greater punishment for forceful conversion of persons from Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribe communities, minors and women. A recent paper in the *Economic and Political Weekly* highlighted how administrations often said that such provisions were in the best interest of these groups, painting them as "naive" and prone to be misled.

More than ten Indian States have passed laws prohibiting certain means of religious conversions – Arunachal Pradesh (1978), Gujarat (2003), Chhattisgarh (2000 and 2006), Rajasthan (2006 and 2008), Himachal Pradesh (2006 and 2019), and Tamil Nadu (a law was enacted in 2002, but repealed in 2004), Jharkhand (2017), Uttarakhand (2018), Uttar Pradesh (2021), and Haryana (2022). The Karnataka Assembly also passed an anti-conversion Bill amid stiff opposition. Since 2017, multiple BJP-ruled States enacted or revised their anti-conversion laws, restricting religious conversions on the additional ground of marriage, supposedly to curb what has been described as "love jihad". For instance, the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Act, 2021, says that a marriage would be declared "null and void" if the conversion is solely for that purpose, and those wishing to change their religion after marriage need to apply to the District Magistrate. Madhya Pradesh also passed a new law in 2021– the Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act (MPFRA), which the State's Home Minister Narottam Mishra described as having the strictest provisions compared to other laws. While other States prescribe that an individual must inform a District Magistrate 30 days prior to an intended conversion, the MPFRA increases this to 60 days, and makes it mandatory for both the individual and the priest facilitating the conversion.

Have these laws been challenged?
The Himachal Pradesh High Court in 2012 struck down certain provisions of the State's 2006 law restricting conversions, holding them "unconstitutional". The Court said that the individual converting their faith also enjoyed their right to privacy and the provision to give a month's prior notice to the District Magistrate violated this right. In 2021, the Gujarat High Court stayed some provisions of the Gujarat Freedom Of Religion Act, 2003, which the State amended in 2021 to add the grounds of marriage to prohibit conversions. This year, the Madhya Pradesh High Court also held certain provisions of the MPFRA unconstitutional. In November last year, the Allahabad High Court allowed several interfaith couples to register their marriages despite not having sought the DM's approval.

THE GIST

- In post-independent India, Odisha became the first State to enact a law restricting religious conversions, which later became a model framework for other States.
- Since 2017, multiple BJP-ruled States enacted or revised their anti-conversion laws, restricting religious conversions on the additional ground of marriage, supposedly to curb what has been described as "love jihad".
- The Himachal Pradesh High Court said that the individual converting their faith enjoyed their right to privacy.

Timings
BENGALURU

MONDAY, DEC. 12	
RISE 06:32	SET 17:55
RISE 21:28	SET 09:50
TUESDAY, DEC. 13	
RISE 06:32	SET 17:55
RISE 22:17	SET 10:33
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 14	
RISE 06:33	SET 17:55
RISE 23:06	SET 11:13

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	27	21
Mysuru	26	18
Bengaluru	25	20

Bengaluru Today
24°C The weather will be pleasant but humid. Spell of light to moderate rain and thundershower is likely to occur.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
26°C A comfortable but humid weather to prevaill. Night will be cool. Spell of light to moderate rain and thundershower to occur.

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THE HINDU
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Smart parking: Tender for eight zones fails to draw bidders; BBMP calls for second one

'This project will help finding a parking spot, which has become challenging in the city, with the help of sensors installed along roads in various zones'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

After implementing the smart parking system on 10 roads in the Central Business District (CBD), the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has now failed to draw any bidders for the system planned for all eight zones.

Recently withdrawing the earlier tender, the civic body has called for a fresh tender under the design, build, finance, operation, and transfer (DBFOT) smart parking model for street parking spaces in the city.

This September, the BBMP called for the tender. This month it called for the fresh tender with a few changes, including reducing the year of previous experience and earnest money deposit (EMD) amount.

The trial of the smart parking system on Kasturba Road. K. MURALI KUMAR

An official from the BBMP Traffic engineering cell (TEC) said, "From five years of experience, we have reduced it to three years considering the COVID-19 lockdown in the last two years where many contractors were not getting work. Now, after the changes, we hope to get new bidders for the project

The BBMP has started smart parking on 10 roads: Cunningham Road, M.G. Road, Kasturba Road, St. Marks Road, Residency Road, Museum Cross Road, Vittal Mallya Road, Mallya Hospital Road, Church Street, Ali Asker Road

to operate under a DBFOT for a period of 10 years in eight zones."

According to officials, the new smart parking system will be taken up according to the new Parking Policy 2.0, which will be implemented by the BBMP under the recommendation of the Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT).

"This project will help find a parking spot, which has become challenging in the city. With the help of sensors installed along roads in various zones, information on the availability of parking slots will be transmitted to a monitoring cell, which will relay the same to motorists via an app. The parking fee can be paid through the app or at the smart parking meters installed on the roads. CCTV cameras will also be installed as a security measure," an official explained.

In the CBD area, the BBMP, along with the Central Parking Services (CPS), a parking management organisation, have started smart parking in 10 roads, including Kasturba Road, Cunningham Road, M.G. Road, St. Marks Road, Residency Road, Vittal Mallya Road, Mallya Hospital Road, Museum Cross Road, and Ali Asker Road.

"This is an attempt to solve traffic congestion in the city, which is compounded by illegal parking," the official added.

Fake police cheat women online, threaten to foist cases against them

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The next time you get a call from unknown numbers claiming to be Customs officials or the police, do not entertain them; they are cyber fraudsters on the prowl. They will trap you and extort money after threatening to file cases against you. Such incidents have been on the rise of late and the cyber crime police have registered three cases in two days.

Garima Sanoria, 30, a homemaker from Sanjaynagar, received a call from an unknown number on Wednesday. The caller claimed to be an officer from the "Customs and Narcotics Department" and informed her that there was a parcel in her name from Taiwan containing narcotics and suggested that she contact the Mumbai branch of the cyber crime police for any dispute.

Before Ms. Sanoria could react, she got another call from a person identifying himself as Naresh Gupta Bananji from the Mumbai cyber crime branch, who started questioning her and even forwarded a notice.

People should not entertain such calls which claim to be from either the customs or the police, a police official said. REUTERS

Ms. Sanoria tried to reason with him, but the accused asked her for her Aadhaar and bank details on the pretext of initiating legal action.

Later, on the pretext of helping to bail her out from the situation, the "officer" asked her to transfer a total of ₹1.23 lakh online. The cheating came to light when Ms. Sanoria shared the details with her family and relatives and tried to call the numbers back, but they were not reachable.

Similarly, Nidhi A.J., a 26-year-old woman from Banashankari, filed a complaint with the South Division cyber crime police that she had been cheated by a conman posing as a member of the Mumbai police. In her complaint, Ms. Nidhi said she received a call from an unknown number informing her that she had a parcel in her name from Taiwan.

A few minutes later, she got another call with the person identifying himself as a Mumbai police officer from the Narcotics division informing Ms. Nidhi that the parcel contained narcotics and threatened to file a case against her.

He extorted ₹84,572 online from her in the guise of "helping her out."

In another incident, Mouna Khanna, a 44-year-old homemaker from Yelahanka, was also cheated by a conman posing as an executive of a private courier service and a police officer on Tuesday.

The accused called her informing that she had a courier in her name from Taiwan which contained 50 grams of drugs.

While she was trying to explain, the accused told her that the money had also been transferred from her bank account to pay for the courier.

Minutes later, she got another call from a man posing as a policeman and on the pretext of checking her bank account details, forced her to transfer a total of ₹1.93 lakh online to his account.

City students to present projects at the U.N.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Students from Bengaluru will be part of a group that will present their impact projects at the 1M1B Activate Impact Summit at the United Nations headquarters in New York on December 14.

Around 14 1M1B future leaders, including students from Bengaluru who have worked on various projects that focus on sustainability, environment, poverty, malnutrition of women and children, water-related issues, livelihood, education and healthcare, financial literacy, and others, will be part of the group.

Some of the projects to be presented are 'Udaan' by Ananya Seth from Bengaluru, which focuses on bridging the financial gap for economically backward women by getting them into health insurance and policies, and 'Flow' by Aryen Singhal from Bengaluru, which addresses water crisis by reducing wastage through initiatives such as water meters and aerators.

The release further said Hruthvik Deependu H. from Class X provided 150 people with basic eye check-up and raised funds of ₹2 lakh.

Shubh Jani from Class IX provided heath insurance to 15 house helpers and conducted awareness programmes at school and raised ₹70,000 via crowdfunding.

The students will participate in a three-day immersion event with an opportunity to showcase their success stories to the world, said a release.

1M1B (One Million For One Billion) is a social innovation and future skills initiative aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its programmes are available in over 3,000 schools across India.

From Page One

Revamp on the cards for iconic *thindi beedhi*

Meanwhile, shopkeepers are relieved and happy that the famous food street will be redeveloped, which they hope will bring more business and make the street customer-friendly.

Basavaraj, a vendor, said, "We were demanding the civic body to revamp the food street for many years since it lacks facilities. Customers are happy to visit the place but due to poor road conditions and heavy traffic, many people don't like to visit."

Manjunath, another vendor, said, "Now as the BBMP will revamp the street, both customers and the shopkeepers will benefit. We will cooperate with the BBMP during the work."

Patrons, too, are looking forward to the plan. Samanth Prasad, a student who regularly visits food street, said it is a good decision by the civic body to revamp the stretch. "It is now in a very bad condition and lacks facilities despite being one of the popular haunts in the city. Since many tourists visit this place, BBMP should also bring some international standards at least like Church Street."

In August this year, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, who had also visited the V.V. Puram food street, took a food walk and enjoyed a variety of dishes.

Gym trainers get more cautious following recent fatalities

Jahnavi T.R.
BENGALURU

Following recent fatalities in gyms, owners and trainers in the city have now become extra cautious about the health of those who get admitted at their centres.

Trainers are recommending "lighter" and "easier" exercises especially for those above 40 and 50 years.

However, trainers also say that people of any age can work out, but should practise a regime which suits their body.

While bigger gyms have had certain practices like recommending medical check-ups for senior clients before starting a workout routine, smaller gyms have also hopped on to the trend after recent cases of cardiac arrests, including of celebrities, suspectedly after intensive workouts. "If someone above the age of 40 comes to the gym, we first learn their medical history. Depending on their condition, we do not give them any high-intensity workouts. We increase the intensity gradually and after three months we recommend a health check-up again. There will usually be an improvement in their health and after that we continue the regime," explained Maruthi, of Muscle Planet Gym in Basaweshvaranagar.

Bigger gyms have recommended medical check-up for senior clients before starting a workout routine. SUDHAKARA JAIN

These new regulations have perplexed older clients who are trying to join gyms only for fitness purposes. "I recently joined a gym for basic exercises. I did not even ask for high-intensity workouts. But the trainer there outright refused to work with me and told me to work out on my own. He said that as I am above 50 years, he does not want to give me any recommendations even though I told him that I have no pre-existing health conditions," said Surya Prakash, a resident of Vijayanagar.

Gym owners, on the other hand, say that they are not hesitant to train people of any age groups. They also said that in Bengaluru, the number of people who work out more at the gyms fall between the age groups of 20 and 40. "There are no rules from the government or within our associations to follow such practices. Older people do not usually join gyms, but if they do, we will train them according to their requirements," said Reddy, trainer at Physique Health and Fitness Club in Jalahalli.

KRISHNA BHAGYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Office of the Executive Engineer, KBJNL, Dam Division, Almatti-586201.
Tq:B.Bagewadi Dt: Vijayapur.
Phone:08426-281027 E-mail:dam_division@rediffmail.com

NO:KBJNL/DDA/PB-2/Tender/2022-23/3061 Dated:09.12.2022

CORRIGENDUM NOTIFICATION

This office tender notification No.: 2935 Dt:25.11.2022 for the Work of **"Survey, Investigation, Design, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of Lift System comprising required number Vertical Turbine Pumps coupled to HT Motors, Pump House, Electrical works, Power supply including Terminal bay, 110Kv Electrical Substation, Transmission line, Construction of Intake Canal, Jack well Cum Pump house and its auxilory works including approach road, civil works for electrical sub station, Manifold, MS Rising Main, Valves, Road crossing, Railway & Canal Crossing, Surge Protection works, Delivery Chambers, supply of Spares parts & Tools including Operation and Maintenance for Five years after successful Commissioning of the entire system for Bhagavathi Lift Irrigation Schemes Head works on Turn-key Basis (Stage-I)" (Indent no. 23171)** dates of publications are modified as under,

Sl.No	Details	Previous Events	Present Events
1	Last Date & time for receipt of tenders	15.12.2022 Upto 5.00 PM	17.12.2022 Upto 5.00 PM
2	Cover-I will be opened on	17.12.2022 at 11.00 AM	19.12.2022 at 5.00 PM
3	Cover-II will be opened on	22.12.2022 at 11.00 AM	23.12.2022 at 11.00 AM

There will be no changes in the tender conditions. Details can be obtained from http://www.eproc.karnata.gov.in web site. Further Details can be obtained from Office No. 08426-281027

ವಾಸಸಂಇ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/650/ಎಂಸಿಎ/2022–23 **Sd/- Executive Engineer, KBJNL, Dam Division, Almatti**

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN:U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No: 908/BGKT/TR(W&M)/SE(E)/EE(O/AEE(E)-2/F-53/5498-509 Date: 09.12.2022

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through e-Procurement Portal only)

KPTCL invites tender on Electronic mode for the following works coming under Transmission (W&M) Circle, KPTCL, Bagalakot on **Partial Turnkey basis.**

(1) Bid Enquiry No: KPTCL/2022-23/SS/WORK_INDENT 9374/CALL-4 for Providing additional 1x10MVA, 110/11kV Power Transformer along with switchgears at **110kV Halaki sub-station** in Mudhol taluk, Bagalkot district.

(2) Bid Enquiry No: KPTCL/2022-23/SS/WORK_INDENT 9679/CALL-2 for Providing additional 1x10MVA, 110/11kV Power Transformer along with 11kV switchgears at **110kV Aski sub-station** in Sindagi taluk, Vijayapura district.

(3)Bid Enquiry No: KPTCL/2022-23/SS/WORK_INDENT 9680/CALL-2 for Providing additional 1x10MVA, 110/11kV Power Transformer along with 11kV switchgears at **110kV Devaragennur sub-station** in Babaleshwar taluk, Vijayapura district.

(4)Bid Enquiry No: KPTCL/2022-23/SS/WORK_INDENT 9681/CALL-2 for Providing additional 1x10MVA, 110/11kV Power Transformer along with 11kV switchgears at **110kV Hirebevanur sub-station** in Indi taluk, Vijayapura district.

(5)Bid Enquiry No: KPTCL/2022-23/SS/WORK_INDENT 9682/CALL-2 for Providing additional 1x10MVA, 110/11kV Power Transformer along with 11kV switchgears at **110kV Moratagi sub-station** in Sindagi taluk, Vijayapura district.

(6)Bid Enquiry No: KPTCL/2022-23/SS/WORK_INDENT 10056 for Providing additional 1x10MVA, 110/11kV Power Transformer along with 11kV switchgears at **110kV Takkalaki sub-station** in Vijayapur taluk, Vijayapura district.

(7)Bid Enquiry No: KPTCL/2022-23/SS/WORK_INDENT 10057 for Providing additional 1x10MVA, 110/11kV Power Transformer at **110kV Honawad sub-station** in Tikota taluk, Vijayapura district.

The tenders will be received through e-procurement portal only. The details regarding participation in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website **http://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** on hyperlink "e-Procurement-KPTCL" or to **http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in on or after 12:00 Hrs of 13.12.2022.** Any other details can be had from the office of the under signed during office hours.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer (Ele),
Transmission (W&M) Circle, KPTCL, Zonal Office Complex,
Opp. Sector No. 45, Navanagar, Bagalkot - 587103.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that our clients are in the process of purchasing the property, Villa bearing **No. 66,** in the project known as **"Heritage County"**, bearing Property Identification No. 150200102200121241 situated at Thindlu Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore District, Bangalore more fully mentioned and described in the Schedule hereunder, from its Owners, **Mr. Volety Poorna Chandra Rao and Volety Aparna.** Any person/s having objection/s or claim/s over the Schedule Property shall, with documentary evidence, lodge their objections or claims within **3 days** from the date of this notice to the undersigned, failing which our client shall proceed with the above mentioned purchase. Please note that the claims, if any, arise in future, shall not be entertained.

SCHEDULE

The Plot bearing **No.66,** measuring 1500 Square feet along with Villa bearing Property ID No. 150200102200121241, measuring super built up area of 181.23 Square Meters (1951 Sq. Ft.) in the Project known as **"Heritage County"** and bounded on the : **East by : Property bearing No.51; West by : Panchayath Road ; North by: Property bearing No.65; South by : Property bearing No.67.**

Madhusudhana Reddy.R
Anusha.R,
Advocates, Trinetra and Partners
'Trinetra' No. 209, 2nd Floor, Mota Chambers
No. 9, Cunningham Road, Bangalore – 560 052
Ph : : 9900062200 / 8892138853
email : trinetralegal@gmail.com

Bangalore Date : 12-12-2022

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN : U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No: SEE/Tr(M)/BRAZ/EE/AEE-2/F-T6/2022-23/4938 Date: 09.12.2022

TENDER NOTIFICATION (THROUGH E-PROCUREMENT MODE ONLY)

KPTCL invites against **Bid Enquiry No.:** KPTCL/SEE/TR(M)/BRAZ/EE(O)/AEE-3/T-6/22-23/EPR-726 (Call-2) Dated: 07.12.2022 for Design, Manufacture, Testing and supply of 12 (Twelve) No's of LTAC panel (indoor), 415V as per technical specification comprising of voltmeter and ammeter, 1I/C MCCB 200A + 2 nos. 3-Phase 63A O/G SFU, + 2nos. 3 Phase 32A O/G SFU + 6nos. 3 Phase 16A SFU etc. for use at various 66/11KV downstream stations coming under Transmission (Maintenance), BRAZ Circle, KPTCL, Bengaluru on two part basis. The bids will be received through e-Procurement mode only. The detailed notification regarding the subject tenders can be got by logging on to **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink "e-procurement–KPTCL" or **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in on or after 12.12.2022.** Any other details can be had from the Office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer (Elec.)
Transmission (Maintenance), BRAZ, KPTCL, UAS Campus,
Hebbal Bengaluru - 560 024. Ph: 080-23415347

CACHE

GETTY IMAGES

What is end-to-end encryption and why are tech companies focusing on it?

Even though law enforcement agencies insist on encryption schemes which could enable 'lawful access by design', the move by messaging apps and technology giants to use end-to-end encryption to secure user data seems to be only getting stronger

Nabeel Ahmed

The story so far:

Apple, on Wednesday, announced it will be increasing the number of data points protected by end-to-end encryption on iCloud from 14 to 23 categories. The company claimed that with end-to-end encryption, user data will be protected even in case data is breached in the cloud. Similarly, Elon Musk, in November, said that he wanted Twitter DMs to be encrypted. He also shared that he is in contact with Moxie Marlinspike, creator of Signal who was willing to help out with encrypting Twitter DMs. However, government agencies are not happy with the development. The FBI in a statement to *AP* said that while it remains a strong advocate of encryption, it is deeply concerned with the threat that end-to-end encryption and user-only access pose. The agency insisted they hinder its ability to protect Americans from cyber-attacks, violence against children, and terrorism.

What is end-to-end encryption?

End-to-end encryption is a communication process that encrypts data being shared between two devices. It prevents third parties like cloud service providers, internet service providers (ISPs) and cybercriminals from accessing data while it is being transferred. The process of end-to-end encryption uses an algorithm that transforms standard text into an unreadable format. This format can only be unscrambled and read by those with the decryption keys, which are only stored on endpoints and not with any third parties including companies providing the service. End-to-end encryption has long been used when transferring business documents, financial details, legal proceedings, and personal conversations. It can also be used to control users' authorisation when accessing stored data, which seems to be what Apple intends to do.

Where is it used?

End-to-end encryption is used to secure communications. Some of the popular instant-messaging apps that use it are Signal, WhatsApp, iMessage, and Google messages. However, instant messaging is not the only place where user data is protected using end-to-end encryption. It is also used to secure passwords, protect stored data and safeguard data on cloud storage.

Why are tech companies using it?

Apple, on its blog, cited data breach research, "The Rising Threat to Consumer Data in the Cloud", stating that the total number of data breaches more than tripled between 2013 and 2021. The company shared that data of 1.1 billion personal records were exposed in 2021 alone and that it is trying to address this rising threat by implementing end-to-end encryption. Apple also said that it believes the extra layer of protection would be valuable to targets of hacking attacks launched by well-funded groups. Mr. Musk has also publicly talked about his desire to improve Twitter's direct messages. Mr. Musk told employees that the company would encrypt DMs and work to add encrypted video and voice calling between users, according to a report from *The Verge*.

The focus on end-to-end encryption seems to stem from the company's desire to position itself as a provider of secure data storage and transfer services. End-to-end encryption is also seen as a technology that secures users' data from snooping by government agencies, making it a sought-after feature by activists, journalists, and political opponents.

What does it mean for users?

End-to-end encryption ensures that user data is protected from unwarranted parties including service providers, cloud storage providers, and companies that handle encrypted data.

Apple on its support page shared that end-to-end encrypted data can only be decrypted by trusted devices where users are signed with their Apple ID. No one else can access this data and it remains secure even in the case of a data breach in the cloud storage.

The data can only be accessed with access to the device passcode, password, recovery contact, or recovery key. The technology also makes it harder for service providers to share user information from their services with authorities.

However, end-to-end encryption does not protect metadata, which includes information like when a file was created, the date when a message is sent and the endpoints between which data was shared.

Why are government agencies unhappy with it?

The FBI in a statement expressed displeasure at the idea of increasing use of end-to-end encryption by technology companies. It said that while it remains a strong advocate of encryption schemes that give "lawful access by design", that would enable tech companies "served with a legal order" to decrypt data, it "continues to be deeply concerned with the threat end-to-end and user-only-access encryption pose", it said in a statement to the *Associated Press*.

Attempts by government agencies across the globe, in the past, to access encrypted data hosted and stored by tech companies have met with strong resistance.

In 2019, the U. S., the U. K., and Australia planned to pressure Facebook to create a backdoor into its encrypted messaging apps. The aim was to allow governments to access the contents of private communications according to a report by *The Guardian*.

Australia, in 2018, passed laws that would force tech companies and service providers to build capabilities allowing law enforcement secret access to messages on platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook.

The legislation, according to government agencies was necessary to prevent "terrorists" and other serious criminals from hiding from the law, according to a report by *Al Jazeera*.

While cryptographers and cybersecurity experts argue that attempts by law enforcement to weaken encryption with backdoors are ill-advised and could compromise the reliability of the internet, the move by tech companies to use end-to-end encryption to secure more user data seems to be getting stronger.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

One of the biggest names in Indian cinema Rajinikanth turns 72 on December 12. Test your knowledge of the icon simply called 'Superstar'

V. V. Ramanan

QUESTION 1

Rajinikanth's debut film *Aboorva Raagangal* in 1975 had Kamal Haasan in the main role. Which was the last film in which the two living legends acted together?

QUESTION 2

Which film personality, who became an influential figure in both regional and national politics, was Rajini's co-star in the latter's 50th film *Tiger*?

QUESTION 3

It is no secret that Rajinikanth has a cult following across the globe and is particularly famous in Japan. Which of his blockbusters was released in that country under the title 'Odoru Maharaja'?

QUESTION 4

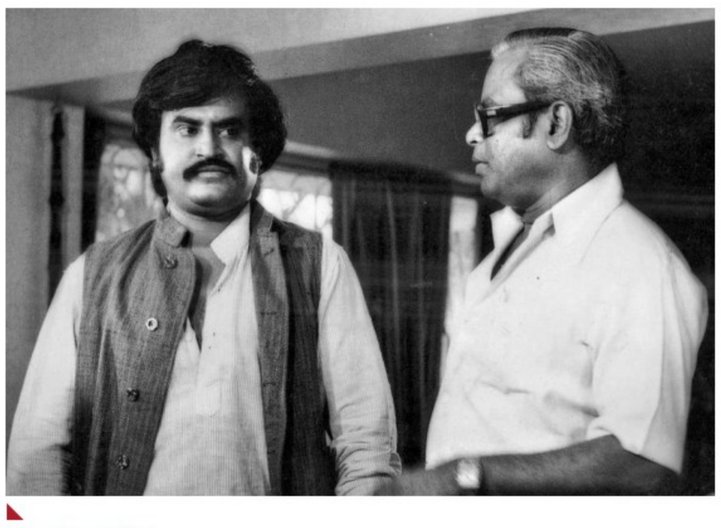
Directed by Dwight H. Little, which 1988 film is the only English flick starring the Superstar that was also dubbed and released in Tamil as *Vairavel*?

QUESTION 5

The only time he did playback singing was a duet with S. Janaki, under the music direction of Ilayaraja, for a film that starred Vijayashanti. Identify the song and the film.

QUESTION 6

In which year was he given the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, the nation's highest award in the field of cinema?



Visual question:
This still shows K. Balachander directing Rajinikanth in an all-time comedy hit that saw the Superstar play a 'double' role. Name the film and the name of Rajini's characters. FILE PHOTO

Questions and Answers to the December 9 edition of the daily quiz: 1. This leader, born on December 9, addressed her first rally at Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu. **Ans: Sonia Gandhi**
2. Putting an end to the almost 12-year beef, these two rappers came together at a concert in Los Angeles. **Ans: Drake and Kanye**
3. This contagious disease is said to be one of the first to be controlled by a vaccine. **Ans: Smallpox**
4. A gruesome murder witnessed by this person was published as this book. **Ans: *Stopping the Presses* by Marda Liggett Woodbury**
5. The common link between blank verse, L'Allegro, freedom of press and Samson Agonistes. **Ans: They all allude to poems and writings of John Milton**
Visual: Name the movie and the comic strip. **Ans: *A Charlie Brown Christmas* and *Peanuts***
Early birds: Jagadish. S| Raibandi Ashwin Ratna| Tania Neogi| Aaqib Mir| Rahim Korbo

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

Did you get a quote from the Minister for your story?

You would think that a story on shrinkflation was outdated but surprisingly it still has relevance

S. Upendran

What is the difference between 'quote' and 'cite'? (K. Sashikanth, Hyderabad)

I will deal with one of the differences here. Both are normally used when you wish to provide support to an argument you are making. When you 'quote' someone, you reproduce verbatim what someone has said or written. You use the same words that the individual did. You are not summarising what the individual said; you are merely parroting him. Therefore, it is sometimes possible to quote someone without really understanding the meaning of the words. When you 'cite' someone, you do not reproduce word for word what the person had said or written. In this case, you merely summarise the content. This requires some amount of understanding. During a debate, when you wish to substantiate a point you are making, you normally 'cite' someone who is considered to be an authority on the subject. While writing a dissertation or an academic paper, people are expected to cite and quote extensively. Anyone can be quoted but not everyone can be cited.

What is the correct pronunciation of 'asthma'? (R. Nalini, Vizag)

The problem with English is that the spelling of a word does not really tell us how the word is to be pronounced. This is because there are 44 sounds in English – 20 vowel sounds and 24 consonant sounds – and we make use of the 26 letters of the alphabet to represent the 44 sounds. The 'th' in 'asthma' normally remain silent – the letters are not pronounced. In British English, the first syllable is pronounced like the word 'ass', while the 'a' in the second, sounds like the 'a' in 'china'. They pronounce the word 'ASS-ma' with the stress on the first syllable. Americans pronounce the 's' like the 'z' in 'zip' and 'zoo'. People with asthma have a lung problem.

What is 'shrinkflation'? (Dheeraj Kumar, Delhi)

We all know what 'inflation' is; it is when the price of everything goes up. Things become expensive. Common sense suggests that 'shrinkflation' is the opposite of inflation – it is the shrinking of inflation. This, however, is not the case. When there is inflation, companies generally do one of two things – normally, they increase the price of a product. Sometimes, they keep the price of the product the same, but reduce the quantity of the product being packaged. During 'shrinkflation', the price remains the same; what shrinks is the quantity or the quality of the product.

upendrankye@gmail.com

Word of the day

Impetuous:
characterised by undue haste and lack of thought or deliberation; marked by violent force

Synonyms: hotheaded, impulsive

Usage:
We made an impetuous decision to get ice cream at midnight.

Pronunciation: bit.ly/impetuouspro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ɪmˈpɛtjʊəs/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

Newly built Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway has pushed up land prices along its stretch

'Bengaluru's exponential growth, traffic, and high pollution levels are also encouraging potential investors to explore the city's outskirts'

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU

The newly built Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway has pushed up land prices along its stretches in both villages and towns. Even the rental values have gone up, especially in towns like Ramanagaram and Channapatna.

Kishore Chandra, a resident of Ramanagaram, who has five acres of land next to the newly constructed expressway, is planning to convert his agricultural land into plots, as the land near the 10-lane expressway project is seeing high appreciation.

Conversion of land

Mr. Chandra, who purchased the land in 1987 and was using it for agricultural purposes, said: "We knew the land value in this area will increase after the expressway project work started in 2018 itself. Now, the time has come and we are already preparing the documents to convert the land into plots apart from constructing a farmhouse here."

According to president of CREDAI, Bengaluru, Bhaskar T. Nagendrappa, the land value increasing along the Mysuru-Bengaluru expressway comes at a time when real estate is already in an upward cycle

Even the rental values have gone up especially in towns like Ramanagaram and Channapatna

after being hit by COVID-19 for two years. "Bengaluru's exponential growth, traffic, and high pollution levels are also encouraging potential investors to explore the city's outskirts, especially Channapatna and Ramanagaram, as real estate investment alternative. It is seen that the demand for land has pushed up prices for property along the expressway."

Apart from the price of agricultural land, the expressway has pushed up real estate value in the towns en route due to the improved connectivity.

Touching ₹1 crore

Srinivasaiah, a resident of Srirangapatna, said, "The cost for an acre near Srirangapatna town was around ₹10 lakh to ₹20 lakh a decade ago, but now ranges between ₹60 lakh and ₹80 lakh, and even ₹1 crore in certain areas."

He also said that the land in the nearby villages had also become dearer after the expressway came up. "Many farmers have sold their land as prices started appreciating and returns from agriculture were far from satisfactory. Earlier, due to COVID-19, no one had come to purchase land. But now after the pandemic is over, the demand for land has increased," he added.

50% escalation

"Wherever highways come up, land value will automatically increase, but when the government acquires the land, we don't increase prices. Later on, once the road is ready, properties around the expressway will see 50% higher rate," a official from the Department of Stamps and Registration said.

The value of land increasing along the Mysuru-Bengaluru expressway comes at a time when real estate is already in an upward cycle after being hit by COVID-19 for two years.K. MURALI KUMAR

Property buyers looking for farmhouses and villas

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU

As the Bengaluru-Mysuru expressway is almost ready to be opened, new layouts are coming up, especially on agricultural land near the stretch.

Property projects have already been started by various developers on the Mysuru road, as the demand has been created by home buyers and investors, say developers.

The travel time between Bengaluru and Mysuru is expected to be just 90 minutes, after the 10-lane expressway becomes operational. The demand for villas and plots will be huge, according to property developers.

"People are already looking for villas or plots on the Mysuru road and surrounding areas since the expressway was constructed. Apart from this, the NICE road and the metro rail extension also boost the development of property," Vijaya Prasad, a property developer in Kumbalgod told *The Hindu*.

"The expressway connects to Mysuru, while the NICE road connects to different parts of the city and the metro connects the city, which is a hassle-free network for connectivity. This is why we are seeing appreciation of property prices in and around Kengeri, Bidadi, and Ramanagaram," Mr. Prasad said.

As the Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway is nearing completion, developers and land owners are seeing a big surge in demand among homebuyers for farmhouses.

Prithvi Kumar, property developer in Bengaluru, said that he has been asked by many about farmhouses or villas to purchase near the expressway.

"Many people in Bengaluru now want to invest in farmhouses close to their permanent location, so that they can spend time there on weekends or settle down there after retirement. This demand is also because the Mysuru road and Ramanagaram have plenty of picturesque lands," he explained.

The Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway project has been taken up by the National Highways Authority of India at a cost of ₹8,066 crore, and is set to be fully functional soon. The 10-lane access controlled highway will have service roads on either side for the entire stretch of 118 km.

The entire highway stretch will have 9 major bridges, 44 minor bridges, 4 rail over bridge, 28 vehicular underpasses, 8 vehicular overpass, 13 light vehicle underpass, 13 pedestrian underpass and two rest areas.

City to see cloudy skies with light rains till Tuesday

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Although there was some relief in the morning, by the afternoon hours, light rains and drizzle resumed in Bengaluru on Sunday, as the effect of cyclone Mandous continued. The weekend plans of many came to a halt as the rains did not let up until late in the evening. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Bengaluru, cloudy skies with light rains will continue in the city until Tuesday at least.

Between the mornings of Saturday and Sunday, the Kempegowda International Airport observatory had recorded 6 cm rainfall, whereas Bengaluru city recorded 4 cm, and HAL airport recorded 3 cm. The intensity of the cyclone had however reduced by Sunday.

In Bengaluru, on Sunday, the minimum temperature was around 17.8 degrees Celsius, whereas the maximum temperature was 21.6 degrees Celsius.

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THE HINDU
EDUCATIONPLUS
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A French connection

The Director of SciencesPo's Centre for Asia, Pacific, Africa and Middle East talks about the institution's interest in welcoming international students, especially from India

S. Poorvaja
poorvaja.s@thehindu.co.in

One of our key mottos is diversity, says Etienne Cazin, Director, the Centre for Asia, Pacific, Africa and Middle East, SciencesPo. This doesn't come as a surprise given that international students currently make up 50% of the French university's student population. Established in 1872, Sciences Po has emerged as a leading destination for Humanities and Social Sciences, and was ranked third in the 2022 QS Rankings for Politics and International Studies globally. The university offers UG, Masters, and Doctoral programmes and currently has around 15,000 students.

"With students from 150 countries, we keenly encourage our young students to think about cultural differences and different perspectives,"' says Cazin, emphasising how the institution does not just focus on attracting students from a few specific countries.

Six core disciplines

The undergraduate degrees, which centre on six core disciplines of Law, Economics, Humanities,

SCIENCES PO AND R. RAVINDRAN

History, Political Sciences and Sociology are taught across seven campuses around France. For the Master's degrees, SciencesPo has seven graduate schools and 30 programmes including International Affairs, Public Affairs, Journalism and Urban Studies.

"It is a great asset for us to have Indian students. Ten years ago, there were nine; now we have around 320 with a majority in the undergraduate programmes." The Indian connection does not end there. SciencesPo has a network of 480 partners across the globe which includes 13 educational institutions in India, which includes IIT-Madras, IIT-Bombay, O.P. Jindal Global University, Delhi, and Christ University, Bengaluru.

"All our students are required to mandatorily study two semesters abroad, and we are keen that they study in colleges in India, as it will be an interesting experience for them," he said, adding that he hopes to enter into more partnerships with institutions.

Language issue

Regarding the need to know French to study at SciencesPo, Cazin is quick to reassure that "there are programmes which are taught in English, and it is totally feasible to come here without knowing French, depending on the programme chosen." He also explains the various methods by which the institution supports its students "with all of their concerns, be it physical or mental health or safety. This is especially important given how many international students we have, who live far away from their families." The campus also has several cultural associations that are inclusive and make students feel welcome.

Talking about future plans in working with Indian educational institutions, Cazin says they are looking forward to developing partnerships at various levels. "Apart from student exchanges, we are also looking at staff exchanges and collaborating on research. When we have good partners in the academic world, we want to take this forward holistically. In India, we can have great partners at every level, especially research."

SCHOLARSHIPS

Credit Suisse Scholarship for MBA and MA (Economics) Students
Aims to help qualified candidates bridge the gap between the cost of the programme fees and their ability to pay.
Eligibility: Applicants must be enrolled in MBA or MA (Economics) programmes at a designated institution and scored 60% or above in passed Class 12 and graduation and demonstrate significant financial need, defined as family income less than or equal to ₹5 lakhs per annum (subject to verification)
Rewards: Up to 80% of total fees or a fixed sum of up to ₹2 lakhs, whichever is lesser
Deadline: December 24
Application: Online
b4s.in/plus/CSE4

Keep India Smiling Foundational Scholarship and Mentorship Programme
Colgate-Palmolive (India) Ltd. aims to provide foundational support to deserving and meritorious people who may lack resources.
Eligibility: Students who have passed Class 10 with at least 75% marks or Class 12 with at least 60% marks in the 2022 board exams and are pursuing higher secondary, three-year graduation, or four-year professional courses (Engineering/ MBBS/ BDS) respectively. Annual family income must be less than ₹5 lakhs per annum.
Rewards: Up to ₹50,000 per year for up to four years, depending on current level.
Deadline: December 31
Application: Online
b4s.in/plus/KISF6

Saksham Scholarship Program for Drivers' Children
Mahindra Finance aims to support children of drivers (all light motor and small commercial vehicles such as taxi, jeep, car and delivery vans) who hold a valid driving license.
Eligibility: Applicants must be in school (class 1 to 12) or in college (upto post-graduation) in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Telangana. Those in class 9 onwards must have scored 60% or more marks in the previous final examination. Annual family income from all sources must not be more than ₹4 lakhs.
Rewards: Scholarship ranging from ₹5,000 to ₹20,000 for 1 year.
Deadline: December 31
Application: Online
b4s.in/plus/SKSP1

Courtesy: buddy4study.com

SAVE THE DATE

Master's in Public Health in International Development
The University of Sheffield, the U.K., invites applications for its Master's in Public Health in International Development course starting in September 2023. This explores the intersections of international development and healthcare policy and practice, while developing the skills to work in health and development organisations. Optional modules on food security, public health, urban development, and climate change are also available.
Eligibility: A three- or four-year Bachelor's degree with a minimum of 60% or first class in in a Social Sciences or Medical subject from a recognised university. Overall IELTS score of 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each component, or equivalent.
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Program Officer

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INBRIEF

CM favours imparting special training for police personnel

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai has favored providing training for mid-level police personnel on the lines of the National Defence Academy (NDA) training. Speaking at a programme organised here on Sunday to present President's police medals to the personnel, the Chief Minister said the lower rank personnel and IPS officers, who are at the top level, get the best training but not mid-level personnel. Training for them must be more effective and for this, a separate training centre, syllabus and courses are required as it would help them to work with more dedication, he said. The Chief Minister stressed on the need to take more stringent steps to check irregularities in police recruitment.

Bommai and BSY to attend swearing-in of Gujarat CM

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and veteran BJP leader B.S. Yediyurappa are visiting Gandhinagar on Monday to take part in the swearing-in ceremony of Bhupendra Patel as the Chief Minister of Gujarat. The swearing-in ceremony is being held at 1.45 p.m. on Monday. Mr. Patel has written to both the leaders, extending an invitation to them to attend the swearing-in ceremony.

Dalit activists, who were on a protest seeking internal reservation, held

They were taken into custody and released later in the evening; the activists have, however, announced that their agitation will continue today too

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Activists of various Dalit organisations, who were protesting in Bengaluru, seeking implementation of recommendations of the A.J. Sadashiva Commission report on internal reservation for communities among Scheduled Castes, were taken into custody and released later on Sunday evening. They have, however, announced that their protest will continue on Monday too.

Members of Dalit organisations taking out a protest rally in Bengaluru on Sunday. PTI

Bringing pressure on the State government to accept the A.J. Sadashiva committee report on equitable distribution of reservation for communities among Scheduled Castes, the activists braved rainfall to sit on a protest at Freedom Park here. They were part of 75 activists, who reached Bengaluru after taking out a padayatra on November 28 from Harihara, about 300 km from here. While the activists sought implementation of the Sadashiva Committee report, they also urged the State government to place the report before the legislature during the ensuing winter session in Belagavi starting from December 19.

B.R. Bhaskar Prasad, general secretary of Social Democratic Party of India, said that despite being arrested and released later, they will continue their protest on Monday. "For the first time, all Dalit factions representing the Dalit left and Dalit right communities are taking part in the protest for internal reservation in a big way. We will continue to sit on dharna on Monday," he said.

Meanwhile, the protesting activists also refused to discuss their issues with Housing Minister V. Somanna, who had gone to Freedom Park. While they asked him to go back, they demanded the presence of Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and a commitment to implement the Sadashiva Commission report, Mr. Prasad said.

Condemning the police action, Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah said that at least the government should have called the protesters for talks. He reminded the BJP that it had come to power promising implementation of the commission's recommendation.

Mr. Siddaramaiah announced that the Congress if voted to power will take all communities into confidence and recommend the implementation of the commission report to the Union government.

Kharge expected to directly involve himself in poll work

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Congress rank and file will be keenly looking at Monday's meeting of party leaders with AICC president M. Mallikarjun Kharge as he is expected to directly involve himself in the preparation for the Assembly elections in 2023.

While the party under his stewardship lost Gujarat but wrested Himachal Pradesh in the recently held elections, Mr. Kharge is expected to not take any chance in his home turf after the meeting. He is being seen as a balancing factor in the jostle for the Chief Minister post between Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah and KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar, and both will be on a guard. "Gujarat and HP came too soon after his elevation. Karnataka will be his litmus test. Monday's meeting is important for all leaders in the State," a senior party leader said.

Importantly, the Congress leaders are expecting him to involve in ticket allocation as both Mr. Siddaramaiah and Mr. Shivakumar's camp are currently involved in shadow boxing and propping up candidates against each other in several constituencies that is expected to prove costly for the party.

Party sources said: "Till now, the Congress high command was dependent on general secretary in charge to relay information about the ground reality based on what was told to them. However, now there are no middlemen and the importance of general secretary in charge will diminish." Basically, Mr. Kharge being a local man, knows his State too well besides having his own channels of communication, sources said.

A party leader pointed out that Mr. Kharge knows ground realities in reserved constituencies across Karnataka, as well general constituencies in Kalyana Karnataka and Bombay Karnataka regions, all of which put together will be over 100 constituencies.

The leader also cannot be complacent that can mar his stature if the party cannot do well in Karnataka. "In Gujarat, he ran into war of words with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He wants to respond with a Congress win in Karnataka," sources said.

Vet varsity submits ₹1.5-crore proposal on fresh LSD vaccine

Rishikesh Bahadur Desai
BELAGAVI

A sense of panic continues among farmers about lumpy skin disease (LSD) that many cattle are infected with, despite assurance by scientists, with people wary of feeding milk from infected cattle to children. As per the 20th livestock census, there are around 29.5 million heads of cattle in Karnataka. Officers suspect that the virus has spread to at least 5% of the cattle across districts.

Once the government approves the proposal, the Karnataka Veterinary, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Sciences University will start producing their own vaccine. GOPICHAND TANDLE

Scientists, however, say there is no cause for panic. "Lack of proper information seems to be the major problem leading to panic among farmers," B.V. Shivaprakash, director or research, Karnataka Veterinary, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Sciences University, said.

He said that the university had submitted a proposal of ₹1.5 crore to the government to develop a fresh LSD vaccine. "Once it is approved, we will start producing our own vaccine and have our own manufacturing facilities," he said. Two years ago, the virus infection was seen only in a few pockets in a few States. But this time, it has spread to several States, he added.

Meanwhile, the State government has fixed a target of procuring 10 million doses of the LSD vaccine for cows, buffaloes, bulls and calves in the State. At least half of this will be manufactured in the State-run Institute of Animal Health and Veterinary Biologicals in Bengaluru. The vaccine molecule and the technology will be taken from the Indian Veterinary Research Institute that developed the vaccine over a decade ago.

"The State government has released enough funds to IAHVB to manufacture vaccines. The first round of vaccination is nearly complete," Prabhu Chauhan, Minister for Animal Husbandry, told *The Hindu*. According to him, the government is planning universal vaccination over a period of two years.

Dr. Shivaprakash said that unlike rabies, brucellosis, or COVID, LSD is not a zoonotic disease. "It does not spread from animals to humans. It is a self-limiting disease caused by a virus," he said.

Panic selling of cattle

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

There is some attempt at panic selling of cattle with visible signs of the disease among farmers in north Karnataka.

"The problems of farmers is complicated because of ban on cattle slaughter. Farmers are not allowed to sell to slaughter houses or agents of slaughter houses. Several farmers are forced to come back from village fairs, as they are unable to sell their animals," said Sidagouda Modagi, Krishik Samaj president. He asked the State government to carry out an awareness creation programme in villages about LSD.

JD(S) list to be out next week?

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Janata Dal (Secular), which put off the announcement of its first list of candidates last month, is likely to release the list next week to coincide with the 62nd birthday of former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy.

While the party has already announced the list of candidates in Tumakuru, Kolar, Chickballapur, and Bengaluru Rural districts where Mr. Kumaraswamy has visited as part of the Pancharatna rally, it is likely that a consolidated list of around 100 candidates will be announced on December 16, which is also the birthday of the party leader. This will include the 32 sitting legislators of the party barring Srinivas Gowda of Kolar and Srinivas of Gubbi, who have been suspended on charges of anti-party activities.

Mr. Kumaraswamy, who was scheduled to announce the list of candidates on November 18 when the Pancharatna yatra was flagged off from Mulubagilu, cited 'astrological advice' by his brother and party leader H.D. Revanna for postponing the announcement. "Mr. Kumaraswamy has organised Srinivas Kalayana to mark his 62nd birthday. He has also called probable candidates to Ramanagaram where he will announce the list," sources said.

Meanwhile, induction of Congress leader from Chamarajapet C. Govindaraju into JD(S) on Sunday raised eyebrows. Mr. Govidaraju had been in the past accused of murder of a RTI activist. However, sources said that he had been acquitted in the case.

CORRIDORS OF POWER

Will Reddy make a comeback?

Former Minister and mining-scam accused Gali Janardhana Reddy (*in picture*) seems to be putting a lot of effort into making a political comeback. For the last two weeks, he has been touring Koppal and Raichur districts apparently to capture the pulse of the voters.

Mr. Reddy, who has been accused in the mining case, is believed to be exploring various options in a bid to return to active politics during the next year's Assembly elections. Though the Supreme Court had ordered him not to visit Ballari, Ananthapuram and Kadapa, Mr. Reddy has been touring other districts in the Kalyana Karnataka region and visiting temples. Miffed over the BJP Central leadership "ignoring him" for the last few years, he is considering options such as contesting elections from the YSR Congress Party. When the media asked about his next political move, Mr. Reddy was tight-lipped. His close friend and Minister B. Sriramulu too seems to be in a Catch-22 situation on supporting the former.

Lakhan's 'non-smart' mobile phone

Can we imagine a politician who does not use social media in these days of political campaigns that have turned into cyber wars?

Lakhan Jarkiholi, the fourth brother from the Gokak clan who entered the Legislative Council a few months ago, does so. Mr. Jarkiholi does not use a smartphone and social media and he announced this at a recent press conference.

When journalists pointed out stories in social media about him and his brothers joining the JD(S), the MLC said they were nothing but rumours being spread by his detractors. However, he said he would not react to them in any way. "I am not bothered about such things, you see," he said, flipping out a phone from his pocket that has none of the "smart" features.

"I carry a phone that costs me ₹3,000. I don't believe in WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter or YouTube. Let others use them. That world is not for me. That is an imaginary world. I live in the real world. I meet people in villages and solve their problems. That is my real world," Mr. Lakhan Jarkiholi declared.

Sympathies for a burglar

With the silver jubilee celebrations of Federation of Basava Balagas in Mysuru on Saturday coinciding with the late Chief Minister S. Nijalingappa's birth anniversary, the seer of Suttur Mutt Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra had an occasion to recall an interaction he had years ago with the late freedom fighter-turned-Congress leader.

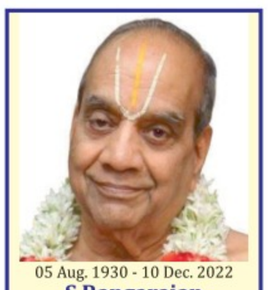
The seer said the former Chief Minister was in Mysuru the night his house was burgled and he was scheduled to visit the mutt for breakfast the morning after. When Mr. Nijalingappa arrived for the breakfast meeting at the mutt, the seer conveyed his sympathies on the burglary that appeared in the newspapers. But, the former Chief Minister, in reply, said he could only pity the thief for choosing the wrong house.

Mr. Nijalingappa explained that the thief's efforts had gone in vain as there were no valuables in his house except for the two silver lamps - given by his in-laws to his wife - that were kept in the prayer room.

Nagesh Prabhu
Rishikesh Bahadur Desai
Laiqh A. Khan

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH



05 Aug. 1930 - 10 Dec. 2022
S Rangarajan
Retired United Nations Officer

Srimath Aandavan devotee, attained Aacharyan Thiruvadi on **December 10, 2022** at his residence in Ashok Nagar, Chennai. A truly warm and generous person, he touched many lives, far and near, and even at 92, remained a child at heart, retaining until the very end the ability to enjoy the simple pleasures of life.

He had an amazingly positive outlook, and despite suffering ailments in his final years, he would cheerfully answer "I am fine."

He was a devoted husband and a loving father and grandfather, and his warm and smiling presence will be deeply missed by his family, relatives and friends.

We are very fortunate and count our blessings for the time we had with him.

Survived by :
Wife : Shanti,
Children : Mala, Anu, Bharath, Deepta and their **Spouses** : Ravi, Chandra, Barbara, Swaminathan,
Grandchildren : Bhaskar, Hari, Dev, Samek.

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PERSONAL
CHANGE OF NAME
I, BOBY Joseph, r/O.1681, 16th Main, 5th Blk, Hbr Lyt, Kalyananagar, Blr–43, Kn has changed name of my son from Gregery to Gregery Boby vide affdvt dated 07/12/22

I, C.SOBHA VENKATESH, legally wedded spouse of 1381506L Rank Hav, C.Venkateswarlu, at No. 36, 3rd Cross, Asha Township, Bileshivale Village, Bangalore North, Bangalore – 560077 have changed my name from C.SOBHA VENKATESH to C. SOBHAVENKATESH my date of birth is 11/10/1972, vide affidavit dated 08–12–2022, before Notary Seshagiri.B

LEGAL NOTICE
Before The M.A.C.T. Vatakara
OP (MV) 288/2021
Sainudeen. N - Petitioner
Nagaraj Bhimashankar Tolanur and Others - Respondents
Nagaraj Bhimashankar Tolanur
S/o. Bhimashankar,
residing at Mallamma Nagar
Mudhol, Bagalkot District,
Karnataka - 587313
- Respondent No. 1
That the above case is posted to 15.02.2023 for the appearance of respondent number 1. Otherwise he will be set exparte by the Honorable Court.
J.S.Rajesh Babu
Advocate for Petitioner

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Capturing 'problem' elephants, the Tamil Nadu way

SPECIAL

Rohan Premkumar
UDHAGAMANDALAM

From meticulous planning to execution, a recently concluded successful operation to capture an elephant called Pandalur Makhna-2, or PM2, in the picturesque Nilgiris has turned the spotlight on the Tamil Nadu Forest Department's excellent recent track record in safely capturing "problem" elephants from the wild and relocating them to areas where they will have fewer conflicts with human beings.

No doubt, the long-drawn-out operation to capture PM2 in Gudalur was criticised by some residents frustrated with the time it took for the Forest Department to deal with the elephant. However, officials explain that a number of factors, centred on ensuring the safety of the elephant as well as that of the Forest Department staff and residents, are kept in mind before an elephant is tranquillised.

"Gudalur and Pandalur are extremely challenging environments for an operation to be undertaken due to the topography of the landscape. The safety of the animal is of paramount importance, while post-darting procedures to reach the animal quickly and get it ready for transportation means that the darting procedure can only be done in a few pre-determined locations," explained a senior Forest Department official, who was involved in the operation.

Jumbo trouble: After a long operation, the Pandalur Makhna-2 elephant was captured near Gudalur. M. SATHYAMOORTHY

Explaining the challenges associated with capturing PM2, Conservator of Forests, D. Venkatesh, said the animal, which is alleged to have damaged around 78 mud houses in the past two years, had become extremely attuned to humans and the workings of the Forest Department. "The moment the animal hears the sounds of approaching forest vehicles and staff, it moves away into the forests," he said.

The operation to capture an elephant requires meticulous planning and coordination to pull off, with the animal having to be identified and its behaviour studied.

Various factors

"It's home range, health condition, the ideal locations where it can be darted safely, the approach to the animal post-darting, are all factored in during an operation," Dr. Kalaivanan said.

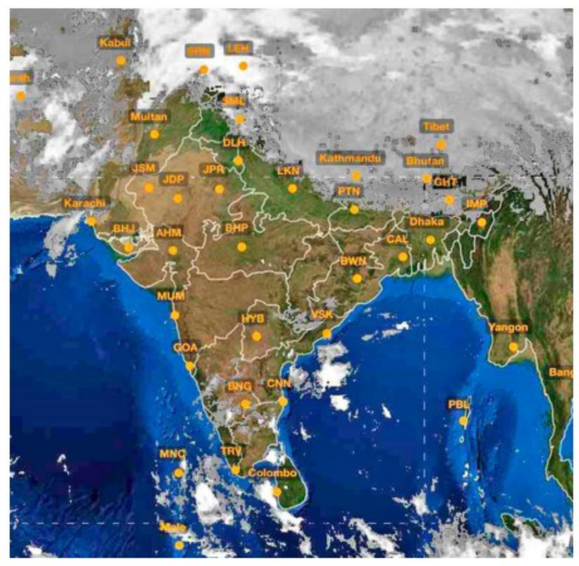
"This is why *kumki* elephants and elephant camps are so crucial, as without them or the elephant men, the only solution to deal with 'problem' elephants like PM2 would be to cull them," he added.

Tracking teams, darting teams, management teams and release teams all have a crucial role to play during an operation and its success is dependent on coordination of the teams. The Forest Department also used drones to track PM2 and hone in on his location.

"Each operation is different, and the time period varies depending on the animal. For instance, in Coimbatore, the order to capture two elephants, Vinayaga and Chinna Thambi, was passed together, and while it took only a day to capture Vinayaga, it took 48 days to capture the latter," Mr. Venkatesh said.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Heavy rainfall at isolated places likely over Kerala and Mahe. Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning at isolated places likely over Madhya Maharashtra, Marathwada, south Konkan, Goa, Telangana, Kerala, Mahe and Lakshadweep. Squally Weather likely over Lakshadweep and Kerala-Karnataka coasts

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	29.0	14.6	Kozhikode	0.8	30.7	24.1
Ahmedabad	—	30.1	14.6	Kurnool	19.0	24.5	21.6
Aizawl	—	—	11.7	Lucknow	—	26.8	12.5
Allahabad	—	27.2	10.7	Madurai	—	33.7	23.6
Bengaluru	41.0	19.6	17.8	Mangaluru	5.6	30.9	21.6
Bhopal	—	27.5	13.4	Mumbai	—	32.0	21.1
Bhubaneswar	—	25.0	18.0	Mysuru	8.0	30.0	16.0
Chandigarh	—	25.8	8.5	New Delhi	—	27.0	10.5
Chennai	13.0	25.1	23.3	Patna	—	—	11.7
Coimbatore	—	28.0	21.2	Port Blair	—	31.2	24.0
Dehradun	—	26.9	7.4	Puducherry	0.2	25.6	21.4
Gangtok	—	14.3	8.2	Pune	—	30.0	16.0
Goa	—	30.3	23.4	Raipur	—	26.2	14.5
Guwahati	—	28.4	14.9	Ranchi	—	24.0	13.6
Hubballi				Shillong	—	18.8	8.2
Hyderabad	2.0	26.0	19.2	Shimla	—	16.8	7.5
Imphal	—	24.3	9.5	Srinagar	1.0	6.8	3.5
Jaipur	—	26.8	11.8	Thiruvananthapuram	34.0	32.4	22.6
Kochi	81.0	30.0	23.0	Tiruchi	0.8	28.5	23.4
Kohima	—	20.5	7.8	Vijayawada	9.0	29.6	22.8
Kolkata	—	27.2	18.2	Visakhapatnam	4.0	27.4	23.2

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	11	131	64	144	—	
Bengaluru	7	—	27	15	15	
Chennai	21	48	47	65	60	
Delhi	14	56	25	355	320	
Hyderabad	2	39	37	128	—	
Kolkata	16	—	13	329	198	
Lucknow	10	90	77	334	252	
Mumbai	78	171	2	322	191	
Pune	—	49	77	—	—	
Visakhapatnam	35	39	18	154	—	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Begusarai, Bihar recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 452 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Aizawl, Mizoram recorded a healthy AQI score of 19

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Police shift Sharmila to hospital amid fast against government

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Y.S. Sharmila

YSR Telangana Party (YSRTP) president Y.S. Sharmila was admitted to Apollo Hospital in the city early on Sunday by the police after her health condition deteriorated due to the indefinite fast against 'denial' of permission to her *Praja Prasthanam padayatra*.

She is currently responding well to treatment.

The YSRTP chief was shifted to the hospital from the fasting site at the party headquarters by police personnel at around 1 a.m.

She was admitted with low blood pressure, weakness, and giddiness, said a medical bulletin issued by Apollo Hospitals.

'Dravidian model' govt. can overcome any calamity: Stalin

He says when DMK assumed power, T.N. was reeling under the impact of the pandemic. However, the State has now successfully recovered from it because of the combined efforts of many

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Sunday said his "Dravidian model" government had the capacity to overcome any natural calamity, and it was proved by the way it had handled the impact of Cyclone Mandous.

Addressing a family wedding of a party functionary, Mr. Stalin said when the DMK assumed power, the State was reeling under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, the State had now successfully recovered from it because of the combined efforts of many. "Ma. Subramanian was the designated Health Minister. However, from the Chief Minister, everyone became Health Ministers and brought the disease under control."

Mr. Stalin said the pandemic was followed by flooding, and the DMK government overcame that too.

"Now, we have faced Cyclone Mandous. The Dravidian model government has the capacity to overcome even a cyclone. It is what our late leader Kalaignar (M. Karunanidhi) called hard work," he said.

Appreciation

The Chief Minister said he had been constantly receiving phone calls and everyone had appreciated the good work done by the government to tackle the crisis.

"Social media is flooded with messages praising the government. School Education Minister Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi said I have become the number one Chief Minister. I do not consider it as a tribute. I will take pride only when Tamil Nadu becomes the number one State," he said.

Undertrial in Udupi District Prison at Hiriyadkka dies

The Hindu Bureau
MANGALURU

An undertrial in Udupi District Prison located at Hiriyadkka died on Sunday.

The police said that the undertrial Sadananda Sherigar, 54, attempted to kill himself in front of other inmates in the jail who tried to save him. But he died on the way to hospital in the morning. The post mortem of the body was conducted later.

He hailed from Maala in Karkala taluk of Udupi district. The police had arrested him in July on charges of faking his death by immolating a man of his age (a different person) in a car to avoid by getting arrested in a forged land document case.

Sherigar, from Maala in Karkala taluk, had been arrested in July on charges of faking his death

The deceased worked as a licensed land surveyor. He was facing charges of preparing a fake sketch of a land site by showing a road attached to it when in reality, there was no road attached to the site. Hence, the Karkala police had booked a forgery case against him. Later, a court had summoned him to appear before it by issuing a warrant.

Hence, the police said, fearing his arrest, he had staged his own murder near Henuberu, Byndoor on July 13, 2022. After picking up a man, identified as one Anand of Karkala, of his age in a car from Karkala to Byndoor, he allegedly made Anand drink alcohol mixed with sleeping tablets. Later, the car was allegedly set ablaze while Anand was sleeping inside. This, according to the police, was done to fake Sherigar's death to avoid arrest.

Besides Sherigar, the police had arrested three more persons - Shilpa, 40, from Hirgana, Sathish, 50, and Nithin, 40, both residents of Shirva, in this connection. Sathish and Nithin had been arrested for tampering with evidence in the murder case.

(Those in distress or those having suicidal tendencies can call Arogya Sahayavani Ph.: 104 for help.)

Telangana saw most cybercrime cases in 2021

M. Rajeev
HYDERABAD

Telangana accounted for 7,003 of the total 14,007 cybercrime cases registered across the country in 2021 – the highest in a State last year. The cases included credit/debit card frauds, ATM frauds, online banking frauds and OTP-related frauds among others. Of the 10,395 cases registered in 2020, a total of 3,316 were from Telangana, Union Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar said in reply to a question on financial frauds in the Lok Sabha recently.

Quoting the National Crime Records Bureau, the Minister said of the total cases registered in 2021, chargesheets were filed in 579 while 469 were filed the previous year. In all, 743 persons were arrested during the year as compared to 582 and 172 arrests, respectively, in 2020 and 2019.

The Minister said the government's policies were aimed at ensuring an open, safe, trusted and accountable internet for users. With the expansion of internet services, the number of people exposed to online fraud had also grown. Many challenges in securing cyberspace against online financial frauds also flowed from its vastness and borderless nature.

As per the NCRB data, 6,229, 10,395 and 14,007 cases were registered under the category of "fraud of cybercrime" during 2019, 2020 and 2021, respectively.

Farmers brace for major crop loss as heavy rain batters south coastal A.P.

The Hindu Bureau
NELLORE/ONGOLE

After effect: District Collector K.V.N. Chakradhar Babu inspecting the water flow at the Nellore barrage. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Several villages were marooned as heavy rain lashed south coastal Andhra Pradesh for the third consecutive day on Sunday under the influence of Cyclone Mandous.

The waterbody at Pottepalem, 7 km from Nellore, breached due to rain, cutting off road transport to over 100 villages.

The rain inundated 6,450 hectares of paddy fields in the district. In all, crops on 7,500 hectares were inundated in 118 villages, according to an Agriculture Department report. Overseeing the water flow at the Nellore barrage, Nellore Collector K.V.N. Chakradhar Babu said regulated water release from the Somasila reservoir ensured that there was no major loss of life or damage to property in the district.

"A silver lining to the current wet spell is that it has enabled filling up of 748 tanks to the brim," Mr. Chakradhar Babu said.

New crowd control measures put in place at Sabarimala

The Hindu Bureau
PATHANAMTHITTA

With the entire Sabarimala pilgrimage zone here remaining choked for days on end following an unprecedented influx of devotees, the authorities have begun implementing additional measures to regulate the crowd including the extension of darshan time by 30 minutes.

The hill temple reported the highest footfall for the ongoing season over the three days from December 9 as around 2.3 lakh visited the temple. As part of crowd management, the devotees will be permitted from Pampa to the Sannidhanam in different segments and more police officers have been deployed at each point for the purpose, said Harishchandra Naik, Sabarimala Special Officer.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan is slated to convene a high-level meeting on Sabarimala on Monday.

The key proposals to be discussed include a plan to facilitate hassle-free darsan for children without making them wait for hours. Official sources said a suggestion by the State police to limit the daily number of pilgrims to 85,000 would be discussed.

UDF not worried over CPI(M) bid to win over IUML, says KPCC chief

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

K Sudhakaran

The Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) leadership has clearly answered the question whether it wants to change its political alliance and there is no worry in the United Democratic Front (UDF) about the Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)] trying to 'woo' the League, K. Sudhakaran, Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee president has said.

"Though there are signs that the LDF is attracted to the League, love really starts when both parties are in love with each other," he said on Sunday. He was speaking to the media after the installation of new Kerala Students' Union (KSU) president Aloysius Xavier here at a party function.

Mr. Sudhakaran said CPI (M) State secretary M.V. Govindan appeared to be trying to woo the League. The CPI(M) leader had said on Saturday that the IUML's support to a Bill to remove the Governor as the Chancellor of universities could change the coalition politics in Kerala.

Mr. Sudhakaran also said that there was no spat with Shashi Tharoor, MP. There was a framework within which Congress workers and leaders were expected to function. These issues had been discussed with Mr. Tharoor.

The reorganisation of the Congress would be completed within three months, he said. The party's leadership positions at various levels would be reshuffled in keeping with the assessment of the present leadership. Those active would be retained and those who had not worked well would be removed from the leadership positions, he added.

The Congress leader said the UDF planned to launch a series of protests against the rampant rise in the price of essential commodities and against the widespread use of narcotics in society. He said that while the price of items such as rice was on the rise, the produce in the State was not being procured. Paddy was being washed away in rains in Kuttanad. The farmers were not getting remunerative prices for the produce, he added.

Vizhinjam protest called off to restore peace, says Church

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The letter said the demands put forth by the fishermen were not considered by the government

A pastoral letter read out at the churches under the Latin Archdiocese, Thiruvananthapuram, which spearheaded the fishermen's agitation against the Vizhinjam International Seaport, said the protest against the port was temporarily called off to restore peace along the coastline.

The pastoral letter by Monsignor Thomas J. Netto, Archbishop of the Latin Archdiocese in Thiruvananthapuram, said that it is feared that continuing the protest will lead to further escalation of violence.

Taking note of the situation and the State government's willingness to hold discussions, the protest against the port was withdrawn, the letter said.

The letter that was read out during the Sunday Mass at churches also said the demands put forth by the fishermen were not favourably considered by the government.

Back on track

P.T. Usha can create a road map for India's bid for the Olympics in the 2030s

Decades ago, when P.T. Usha travelled by the Madras-Mangalore Mail, her employers, the Railways, permitted an unscheduled stop at her hometown Payyoli in North Kerala. Such was the respect she garnered for her medal-winning exploits at the Asian level while the collective heart-break she bequeathed in narrowly missing a bronze in the 400m hurdles at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics is remembered even today. After she retired from track-and-field, she evolved as a coach, groomed fresh talent and kept an eye on the grassroots. Her latest appointment as president of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) comes with a surfeit of goodwill. Additionally, it busts the patriarchy inherent in many sports hierarchies across India. She becomes the first woman president of the IOA, a post she was elected to unopposed. In a sense the IOA's hand was forced as factionalism drew censure from the International Olympic Committee and there were whispers of a ban. A change of guard from the earlier well-entrenched lobby with political links was inevitable and Usha was seen as the ideal candidate. Already a nominated Rajya Sabha member, Usha's latest sporting elevation was seen as an organic progress. Having handled many batons while running her famous relays, Usha will find the latest one perhaps the toughest to manoeuvre.

As the umbrella organisation for sports bodies in India, the IOA has to deal with sister associations lost in dissidence. Stadiums become white elephants, leased out for housing loan expos or music concerts. Age-fudging and doping are grim realities as young athletes, seeking jobs, chase medals at the zonal, age-group and national levels. Medals often secure a career opening in public sector units, banks and a few corporates and Usha is aware of this. She and her team of administrators that includes sportspersons and other officials, need to crack the whip. For all the political jostling that happens during the elections, men and women representing opposite ideologies shake hands and become entrenched in sports administration, seeking brownie points and fame. The Government's leaning on the soft power of sports, the Sports Authority of India's initiatives and corporate-backed academies have changed the landscape. India is beginning to aspire for golds beyond the Asian realm and Neeraj Chopra and Abhinav Bindra's exploits in the Olympics are a pointer that the skill-sets are there and if support is provided, medals with better lustre can be secured. With India hoping to bid for the Olympics in the 2030s, Usha and her team are expected to create a road map for that too. The Payyoli Express has a tough challenge ahead.

Cycles of crises

Executive-legislature clashes are bad signs for Peru's democracy

When Pedro Castillo was elected the President of Peru last year, he promised voters a new social contract. With four Presidents in the past five years, there were widespread corruption allegations and growing anger in the country against the ruling elites with unemployment and poverty rising. Mr. Castillo, a former schoolteacher lacking administrative experience, vowed to fix the chronic economic problems and fight corruption. But in less than two years, the socialist met with the same fate as his immediate predecessors – impeachment by Congress. Rather than his ouster – a President being impeached is not new in Peru – what shook the nation were the developments leading to his impeachment. Just after he took over, clashes erupted between him and Congress. He also faced allegations of corruption and running a criminal organisation that profited off government contracts. While he rejected these allegations, by saying old political elites wanted to take back power, his inability to mobilise public and institutional support only emboldened his rivals. Lawmakers tried to impeach him twice invoking a clause in the Constitution that allows the sacking of Presidents "for permanent moral incapacity", but failed to garner enough votes. The crisis came to a tipping point last month when Mr. Castillo threatened to dissolve Congress.

In 1992, President Alberto Fujimori (currently in jail), shut down Peru's Congress, suspended its Constitution and went on to rule as a dictator until 2000. Mr. Castillo announced the dissolution of Congress on December 7, a few hours ahead of a scheduled impeachment vote. He wanted to convene a new Congress and rewrite the Constitution. But unlike the Fujimori plan, Mr. Castillo's collapsed as the military, the police and even aides came out against him. Congress impeached him with 101 to six votes (with 10 abstentions), and Vice-President Dina Boluarte took charge as the new President. While Peruvians avoided a major constitutional crisis by defeating Mr. Castillo's power grab plan, the whole incident should serve as a reminder of the challenges the young democracy faces. Congressional powers could be critical in preventing the rise of another Fujimori, but the constant clashes between the executive and the legislature and the back-to-back impeachment of elected Presidents are not signs of a healthy democracy. In the current political climate and context, it is nearly impossible for any elected President or legislature to have a reform agenda without triggering power clashes. And without reforms, one of the most unequal societies in South America would only get trapped in cycles of economic and political crises.

The role of the 'China Test' in India's grand strategy

Happymon Jacob

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If principal contradictions must determine strategic priorities, New Delhi should decide what its principal contradiction is. The concept of a principal contradiction – one that poses the most intense challenge to an individual/organisation, and has the power to shape its future choices and consequent outcomes – is a useful method of optimising and prioritising strategic decision-making. Whether or not Indian policymakers articulate it as such, China is contemporary India's principal strategic contradiction. Every other challenge, be it Pakistan, internal insurgencies, and difficulties in relations with its neighbours, fall in the category of secondary contradictions.

If so, I would argue that major decisions in New Delhi's strategic decision matrix should pass the China test, which amounts to asking and answering a rather straightforward question: "does x or y decision/development/relationship help deal with the China challenge, or not?" Decision-makers must then view the decision/development/relationship in the light of this answer. It is not that secondary contradictions are not important or that they do not add to the primary contradiction. A perspicacious 'China test' can help prioritise strategic decision making in the longer run, at least as an analytical tool with potential policy utility.

From an operational point of view, the 'China test' consists of three distinct elements. First, an assessment of how a certain Indian decision or a specific regional development squares with Chinese regional strategy or interests. Second, an assessment of whether India's decision or a certain regional development would require India to make modifications at the level of secondary contradictions. And third, an assessment of whether this would require any major policy changes internally. Let me highlight the utility of the 'China test' using a few examples.

India-U.S. relations

New Delhi has had a complicated relationship with Washington which is increasingly getting normalised and interests-driven. Despite its withdrawal from the region, Washington is seeking to re-engage southern Asia (Pakistan, South Asia in general, the Indo-Pacific, and perhaps even the Taliban). It appears that one of the lessons New Delhi learnt from the standoff with China along the Line of Actual Control in 2020 was that it was perhaps a consequence of India's growing proximity to the U.S. If so, should New Delhi temper its relations with the U.S., particularly in the Indo-Pacific, in the hope that this will keep Beijing's aggression at bay? Or, should India continue the strategic partnership with the U.S. irrespective of what China thinks about it?

> It is a rather straightforward one — smart balancing China in Southern Asia and beyond must form a key element in India's grand strategic planning and decision making

What would a 'China test' of India-U.S. relations suggest? Given that Beijing seeks to dominate the region, it is clearly not in its interest to see an American reengagement of the region or growing India-U.S. proximity. If so, the lack of/lukewarm India-U.S. strategic engagement in the region is precisely what would help Beijing's long-term objectives. A China test would suggest that New Delhi should not give into the short-term temptation of not being on the wrong side of China given its long-term implications. While the fears of such a relationship irking China may not be entirely unjustified, they invariably play into the Chinese strategy of boxing India in the region.

Does the China test require India to pacify its relationship with Pakistan? Let us ask ourselves the question: "does making (relative) peace with Pakistan help India better deal with China?" The answer, in my opinion, is a resounding yes. Imagine this. For China, the best-case scenario is an India vigorously preoccupied with Pakistan which ensures that India is not focused on the growing threat from China, thereby providing Beijing with the opportunity to displace traditional Indian primacy in South Asia. So, for India, a course-correction on Pakistan, even if it is only post facto, is a strategically sensible one.

Let me put that somewhat differently. What India should actively seek is not a balance of power in South Asia with Pakistan but balancing Chinese power in Southern Asia. Hence, India's objective in South Asia should be to seek a pacification of conflicts with Pakistan, so that it can focus on China. Similarly, India need not oppose the American engagement of Pakistan for the same reason – it helps prevent Pakistan from going into the China camp completely. A Pakistan engaged with the U.S. and the West is better for India than a Pakistan shunned by the U.S. and the West.

The Russia connection

India-Russia relations in the wake of the Ukraine war are among the most debated bilateral relationships in the world today. Let us apply the China test to examine the logic behind India-Russia relations in the face of western pressure on India to decouple from Moscow. "Does continuing its relationship with Moscow help New Delhi better deal with the China challenge?"

The answer may not be a straightforward one, but the China test does provide an answer. The U.S. and its allies would like India to stop engaging with Moscow and condemn its aggression against Ukraine – which India has refused to do so far. In return, there is on offer greater accommodation of Indian interests including perhaps diplomatic and political support against Chinese aggression. There is also the growing proximity between Moscow and Beijing which reduces the robustness of India-Russia relations. So, does the China test require New Delhi to continue to engage with Moscow against all these odds? While I am personally convinced that India-Russia relations are on the wane, there is a strong rationale for New Delhi to continue its relationship with Moscow – which is China.

Consider this. If indeed New Delhi was to completely break away from Russia (as India's U.S. and western partners have asked India to), what would be the likely consequences of such a decision? Such a decision is most likely to play into China's hands. For one, in the absence of an India-Russia relationship, the extent of Sino-Russian cooperation is likely to strengthen, and India will be cut out of the continental space to its north and west. Second, New Delhi continues to get discounted energy, cheaper defence equipment (even if some of it has to be retrofitted with more sophisticated technology from elsewhere), support at the United Nations Security Council, and Moscow has been understanding of New Delhi's 'political sensitivities' more than its western partners. If India decides to break away from Russia, many of these could come to a grinding halt, and the natural beneficiary of such an eventuality will, undoubtedly, be China. This could also push Moscow towards Pakistan with or without some nudging from Beijing.

It is also important to note that Moscow is not keen to have China dominate the strategic space around it and has been keen to balance the growing influence of China in Central Asia with partners such as New Delhi. New Delhi's turn away from Moscow will ensure that China gets a free hand in Central Asia too. In one sense, therefore, the China piece best explains the enigma called India-Russia relations.

For New Delhi, the message from the China test is a rather straightforward one – smart balancing China in Southern Asia and beyond must form a key element in India's grand strategic planning and decision making.

The narrative of a post-truth world

Atanu Biswas

is Professor of Statistics, Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata

In a January 2017 opinion piece for CNN, world affairs columnist Frida Ghitis wrote: "The fact is Trump has become America's gaslighter in chief". Earlier, in a 2016 article in *Teen Vogue*, writer Lauren Duca used the word "gaslighting" to capture the "post-truth" anxieties that "facts have become interchangeable with opinions, blinding us into arguing amongst ourselves as our very reality is called into question."

Ever since "post-truth" was perceived to be a narrative of the contemporary world – it was also declared as *Oxford Dictionary*'s "Word of the Year" in 2016 – the term has remained shadowy and possibly a bit incomplete. Now, "gaslighting" has not only supplemented "post-truth" but also explained the *modus operandi* for igniting the modern collective post-truth rhetoric.

Political context as catalyst

It was destined to, though. Despite its origins in the 1930s, the term only became a cultural touchstone in the 2010s, particularly in the context of the 2016 U.S. presidential election. It depicted a range of deceptive behaviours by politicians (Donald Trump), who frequently asserted that the media were spreading "fake news", as well as the U.K. government's handling of various issues regarding Brexit. The term first entered psychological literature in 1969. It made its way from the psychotherapist's notebook to the wider public domain by 2018.

In 2018, the term was named a "buzzword" by *The Guardian* and shortlisted for the "word of the year" by *Oxford Dictionary*. And, finally, it became *Merriam-Webster* dictionary's word of the year in 2022, after online searches spiked by 1,740%. As *Merriam-Webster* puts it, "In this age of misinformation – of 'fake news,' conspiracy theories, Twitter trolls, and deepfakes – gaslighting has emerged as a word for our time."

> Society's outlook and direction are very likely to be shaped by collective 'gaslighting', with confusion, deception, accusation and manipulation all forming parts of the process

As per *Psychology Today*, gaslighting is "a form of manipulation where targets are urged to doubt their memories, beliefs, feelings, or sanity".

It is a process

The origin of the term can be traced to the 1938 play, 'Gas Light' by British playwright Patrick Hamilton (a dark tale of a marriage based on deceit and trickery, and with two film adaptations in the 1940s). In George Cukor's Oscar-winning 1944 adaptation (starring Ingrid Bergman), a Victorian husband manipulates his wife into believing that she is going insane so that he can obtain her fortune. When she complains about the constant dimming of their London townhouse's gaslights, he convinces her she has been hallucinating. It wasn't, certainly.

Thus, gaslighting is not an incident but a process, with confusion, lying, deception, isolation, denial, accusation, and manipulation all parts of the process. A 2022 paper in *Popular Communication* postulated: "As well as describing abuse in romantic relationships, the term has provided a lens for popular understanding of 'post-truth' politics." Clearly, there is a significant overlap between gaslighting and post-truth political categories.

Also, in her 2021 paper titled "Post-truth politics and collective gaslighting" (*Episteme*), Natascha Rietdijk wrote that post-truth politics can "fundamentally undermine epistemic autonomy (trusting what one knows), in a way that is similar to the manipulative technique known as gaslighting." Using examples from contemporary politics, she identified three categories of post-truth rhetorics – the introduction of counter-narratives, the discrediting of critics, and the denial of more or less plain facts – that tend to isolate people, leaving them disoriented and unable to distinguish between reliable and unreliable sources.

In context

Knowing the dynamics of gaslighting thus enables us to envisage post-truth in a new light. In the movie, *Gaslight* (1944), Gregory deliberately tries to make his wife Paula lose her mind using manipulation. This, undoubtedly, is gaslighting at the individual level. In contrast, in collective gaslighting, a whole group of people is victimised, but the process would look very much like this.

In the Orwellian, post-truth world, words like "election", "dissent", and even "rights" are contested and derided. Political gaslighters may wish to push through a policy. Simple examples include "stolen elections" to save face after losing one or "fake news" to clamp down on free speech. Jair Bolsonaro's denial of the systematic destruction of the Amazon rainforest or Donald Trump's denial of the 2020 U.S. presidential election outcome are popular examples of collective gaslighting.

"Gaslighting," is not simply lying. It is more sinister. Kate Abramson's 2014 paper "Turning Up The Lights On Gaslighting" (*Philosophical Perspectives*) argues that the gaslighters' characteristic desire is "to destroy even the possibility of disagreement".

The 2022 paper, however, argued how a well-designed and well-intentioned "good echo chamber" might constitute a technique of resistance to online disinformation. But would that be effective to counter the collective gaslighting of the modern world? It is not quite clear, though. What is clear is that, in this post-truth world, collective "gaslighting" might go on shaping society's outlook and direction in the near future, in various ways and directions.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Safe after cyclone Mandous

Had it not been for the accurate weather warning reports by the Meteorological Department and the planned and preventive measures taken by the Tamil Nadu government, the damage caused by Cyclone Mandous during its landfall would have been grave (Page 1, "Cyclone claims 5 lives in T.N., uproots hundreds of trees", December 11). Even areas in Chennai city noted for water logging after any rain were in much better shape this time due to the construction of stormwater drains. Apart from the strenuous efforts taken by the Greater Chennai Corporation staff in ensuring safety, the personal monitoring by the Chief Minister deserves appreciation.

D. Sethuraman,
Chennai

The quick removal of fallen trees, the draining of water and the fast resumption of electricity supply are praiseworthy steps.

A.S. Thirumalai,
Chennai

There is no doubt that the authorities were well prepared this time. The move by the Chief Minister to inspect the affected areas was appreciable.

A.J. Rangarajan,
Chennai

Fight for justice

The details of the Bilkis Bano case are bloodcurdling. The physical and psychological trauma she went through, and has still to relive, cannot be ever described. But she is a strong woman. This case should not be one among the forgotten cases of horror that have scarred India. Bilkis Bano should get justice (Inside pages, "SC to hear Bilkis Bano's petition on Tuesday", December 11)

R.K. Thevatarhsni,
Kovilpatti, Tamil Nadu

Anaemia and men

The prevalence of anaemia among men in rural areas is an important public health issue ('Science' page, December 11). While anaemia has been extensively studied among adolescent children and women in the reproductive age, this finding among rural men through the National Family Health Survey should increase the focus on increasing diversity of food to improve iron and vitamin intake in the community as malnutrition commonly results in iron deficiency among men.

Dr. Thomas Palocaren,
Vellore, Tamil Nadu

IOA president

It was sort of poetic justice — although served late — that a woman, particularly an ace athlete of the stature of P.T. Usha, has been elected the president of the Indian Olympic Association ('Sport page, December 11). The new president could hopefully be able to address the concerns and the issues affecting women sportspersons better with empathy and alacrity. Wish the star all the godspeed.

Ayyasseri Raveendranath,
Aranmula, Kerala

To read more letters online, scan the QR code.
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Questioning the basis of clerical shariah

A. Faizur Rahman

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Last month, Afghanistan's self-styled supreme leader Hibatullah Akhundzada decreed that cases in which shariah conditions of *hudud* (crimes against God) and *qisas* (justified retaliation) were fulfilled, judges must implement "Islamic" punishments because "this is the ruling of shariah, and my command, which is obligatory." Within days of this arrogant pronouncement, 11 men and three women were publicly flogged by the Taliban for committing "moral crimes" such as theft and adultery.

The Taliban are not alone in interpreting Islam in such a narrow way. In July, Sudan sentenced a woman to death by stoning for adultery. Indonesia recently passed a law that makes sex outside marriage punishable by a year in jail on complaints by a spouse, parents or children.

The fact is, most Muslim countries treat the Quran and books of hadith as nothing more than congeries of fossilised codes to be imposed in the name of shariah. The distortion of these texts, and especially the concept of *hudud*, has been so gross that the law that prevails in Muslim societies has not just maligned Islam but enslaved Muslims to the diktats of religious absolutism.

Misrepresenting Hudud

For centuries Muslim jurists have defined *hudud* as prosecutable offences against Allah such as adultery, fornication, theft, unproved allegations of unchastity, apostasy, and even blasphemy. But these acts have not been called *hudud* crimes in the Quran. The Quranic hududullah are the inviolable "limits of Allah" mentioned in the context of the rules of Ramzan fasting (2:187), inheritance rights (4:11-14), and the rights of divorced women (2:229-230, 58:2-4, and 65:1). They have no connection with the post-Prophetic definition of *hudud* laws formalised by the authoritarian alliance between successive Muslim Caliphates and their clergy which even introduced, in the name of Prophetic practice (*sunnah*), extra-Quranic punishments for some of these offences. For instance, a distinction between fornication and adultery was created to over criminalise the former with 100 life-threatening lashes and the latter with death by stoning, a punishment not mentioned in the Quran.

The Quranic sin of *zina* (consensual sex outside marriage) is, in reality, independent of the marital status of the parties. And the punishment of 100 lashes in public for it hinges entirely on the impossible condition that the act must have been physically seen by at least four persons (24:2). Failure to support an accusation of *zina* with four eyewitnesses invites a penalty of 80 lashes (24:4). This unattainable prerequisite indicates that the Quranic pronouncements on *zina* are more in the nature of highlighting its immorality than giving anyone the right to police the private lives of citizens.

The Prophet was reluctant to punish even those who voluntarily admitted to committing "moral crimes". A hadith in *Bukhari* states that when a penitent beseeched the Prophet to punish him for a moral crime, the Prophet told him that considering the congregational prayer he had just offered, "Allah has forgiven your legally punishable sin". Another hadith in *Tirmizi* quotes the Prophet as asking Muslims to avert legal punishments as much as possible because it is better to err in pardoning than in punishing.

The Prophet's understanding of lashing (*jaldah*) too was a far cry from the murderous flogging legalised by some Muslim states. According to hadiths in *Bukhari* and *Bulugh al-Maram*, the "whip" during the Prophet's time was twisted cloth or two palm leaf stalks. In other words, the Prophet did not see *jaldah* as a punitive device to inflict corporal pain. His reluctance to use even flimsy whips underlines his attitude towards the negative impacts of retributivism. It also proves that he practised the doctrines of lenity and constitutional avoidance long before these became axioms of modern law.

Nonetheless, the Quranic idea of lashing as a deterrent to prevent sexual immorality should not be judged on the basis of modern legal theories because it would amount to decontextualising it from 7th century norms. What needs to be appreciated is how the Prophet practised it.

If non-Muslims are not conscious of this fact, it is because Muslim jurists over the centuries have, using questionable hadiths, undermined the Prophet's compassionate exposition of the Quran. For instance, a hadith in Muslim narrates that a person, Ma'iz ibn Malik al-Aslami, confessed to his sin of adultery on three consecutive days but was turned away by the Prophet. When he came back on the fourth day, the Prophet had him stoned to death. The same hadith narrates how a pregnant adulteress was repeatedly sent back by the Prophet and stoned to death after the child was born and fully weaned. The basis of these unbelievable hadiths is another unbelievable hadith in Muslim in which the Prophet is alleged to have ruled that the punishment for fornication is 100 lashes and a year in exile, while adulterers are to be first flogged 100 times and then stoned to death.

What Muslim theologians don't seem to comprehend is that the Prophet could never have gone against the book he was ordered to recite and explicate (3:164). When some of his detractors asked him to tamper with the Quran, he said, "It is not for me to change it of my own accord. I only follow what is revealed to me"(10:15).

Yet some hadiths would have us falsely believe that the Prophet went beyond the Quran and even introduced punishments not mentioned in it. If Islam is to be rescued from such malignant distortions, the Muslim laity must start challenging the clergy's right to deduce law from hadiths that violate the Quran.

> The law that prevails in Muslim societies has not just maligned Islam but enslaved Muslims to the diktats of religious absolutism

A tug of war to attract Hindu voters

While the BJP is using emotional issues, the Congress is not far behind

STATE OF PLAY

Shubhomoy Sikdar
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A face-off between the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress over the Hindu vote bank indicates how the two parties are planning new strategies ahead of the 2023 Madhya Pradesh Assembly elections.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that a committee must be formed to implement the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in the State. He has also emphasised the need for a stronger law to "counter love jihad, if needed". According to BJP leaders, such statements seek to remind the average Hindu voter that the party has not forgotten their "interests and concerns vis-à-vis safety", especially when it is trying to expand its base among Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) through social experiments and targeted government programmes. In fact, Mr. Chouhan's statement on 'love jihad' was made at an event marking the martyrdom day of the tribal icon Tantya Bhil in Indore. Since then, he has raised the issue at other public events too.

Mr. Chouhan justifies his statements on UCC and 'love jihad' by claiming that land owned by the tribal people is now owned by non-tribal people belonging to other faiths after marriage. In the coming days, the Madhya Pradesh BJP plans to emphasise its claim that non-tribal people, widely understood to be Muslims or Christians, are also entering the power structures in tribal regions by fielding their spouses as sarpanches.

Not only have many of Mr. Chouhan's Cabinet and party colleagues endorsed his views on 'love jihad', but Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale, who is currently in Madhya Pradesh, also appealed to party volunteers last week to keep a tab on religious conversions and instances of 'love jihad' in their respective colonies and zones. Going ahead, these issues are expected to prominently figure in the BJP's election campaigns as "there is credible information that such incidents are on the rise," say BJP leaders.

However, there is no official data to support this. The Opposition dubs such occurrences as the government's failure. It believes that claims on development and government initiatives have scattered, if not limited, appeal. But such emotional issues work in attracting different communities, it says, which is crucial for the ruling party which is divided into different power centres in the State. This is also why Mr. Chouhan has been more vocal about these issues since he returned to power in 2020 and has backed his statements with legislative action such as the introduction of the anti-conversion law. Talking about a more stringent law will only further consolidate voters, say Opposition leaders.

Despite its focus on these issues, the BJP is wary about the Congress's comparatively "softer approach" in wooing Hindu voters, particularly during the Bharat Jodo Yatra. The party feels that at the least, it has to ensure that its support base comprising upper and intermediate caste Hindu voters is not swayed by the Congress' manoeuvres, including Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's visits to various temples such as the famous Mahakal temple in Ujjain. More recently, when Mr. Gandhi claimed that the BJP and the RSS say 'Jai Shri Ram' and not 'Jai Siya Ram' because they do not worship Sita, State Minister Narottam Mishra was ready with a mythological explainer of the meaning and context of the honorific 'Shri'. And when former Chief Minister Kamal Nath challenged the BJP, RSS and the Vishva Hindu Parishad to debate "religion and spirituality" with Mr. Gandhi, State Minister Vishvas Sarang and an array of BJP spokespersons offered to participate in this debate in a bid to prove their "Hindu credentials".

Moves such as the revamp of the Mahakal temple, for which Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Ujjain and spoke of a cultural renaissance, are significant for the BJP to keep its Hindu vote base intact and expand it further. However, such issues do not hold the same kind of sway as contentious issues such as Ram temple and the Gyanvapi mosque have in Uttar Pradesh. It is in this context that subjects like 'love jihad', UCC, triple talaq and Article 370 become more crucial for the party to force the Congress to "play on the BJP's turf".

The Congress aims to stay clear of getting dragged into emotional issues. But a fallout of this has been the marginalisation of the Muslim leadership in the State. Arif Masood, an MLA from Bhopal who led campaigns against the implementation of the National Register of Citizens and other issues impacting minorities, is the only leader from the community in the reckoning.

Consumers worried about income, but less so about economy

Over 50% continue to be pessimistic about the general economic situation in India: RBI survey

DATA POINT

The Hindu Data Team

The share of urban consumers who were pessimistic about the Indian economy continued to decline in November 2022 as COVID-19 cases continued to decrease. The pace of decline in pessimistic levels also sharply improved. For instance, between January and May this year, the share of respondents pessimistic about the general economic situation declined from 66% to 63% – a 3%-point decrease. But between July and November, the share decreased from 63% to 55% – an 8%-point decrease. But over half the respondents (55%) continued to be pessimistic about the general economic situation. In the last three years (since November 2019), the share of pessimistic respondents has remained higher than 50%. The observations are based on the Reserve Bank of India's consumer confidence survey conducted across 19 major cities. The latest round of the survey was conducted between November 2 and 11, 2022, covering 6,089 responses.

Chart 1 shows the share of respondents who said the general economic situation worsened compared to a year ago and the share who said the general economic situation will worsen in the next one year.

The share of respondents who were pessimistic about the employment scenario also declined and for the first time in the last three years, dropped below the 50% mark in November 2022.

This meant that those who were worried about their income levels also declined in November, though the degree of decline has been sluggish compared to previous editions of the survey. For instance, between January and May, this year, the share of those who said their income levels decreased declined from 49% to 36% – a 13%-point decrease. But between July and November this year the share decreased from 36% to 33% – a 3%-point decrease. **Chart 2** shows the share of respondents who said their employment scenario worsened compared to a year ago and the share who said the employment scenario will worsen in the next one year. **Chart 3** shows the share of respondents who said their income levels worsened compared to a year ago and the share who said their income levels will worsen in the next one year.

Put together, given the sharp decline in pessimism about income levels between January and May this year, confidence about the economy improved sharply between July and November. But with the decline in pessimism about income levels becoming sluggish between July and November, the confidence in the economy may also take a hit in the coming months or may not improve at a quicker pace as before.

The share of respondents who said that price levels increased also reached a peak (95%) in November 2022, as shown in **Chart 4**.

The share of respondents who said their non-essential spending decreased continued to decline with 44% saying so in November 2022. The share of those who said essential spending decreased also continued to decline to 4%, as shown in **Chart 5**. Non-essential spending includes expenses on consumer durables, motor vehicles, gold and jewelry, expenses on hotels and restaurants. Essential spending includes expenses on food, housing, fuel and electricity, essential clothing, education, medical amenities, transportation.

So, consumers are spending more freely despite saying that the price levels have gone up, probably as their incomes improved this year. However, if the decline in pessimism about income levels continues to be sluggish, their spending behaviour may change sharply going forward.

Measuring confidence in the economy

The graphs are based on the on the RBI's consumer confidence survey conducted across 19 major cities. The latest round of the survey was conducted between November 2 and 11, 2022, covering 6,089 responses

Chart 1: The share of respondents who said the **general economic situation** worsened and will worsen

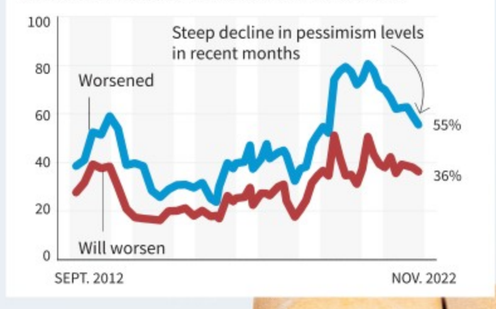


Chart 2: The share of respondents who said their **employment scenario** worsened compared to a year ago and will worsen in the next one year

Chart 3: The share of respondents who said their **income levels** worsened compared to a year ago and will worsen in the next one year

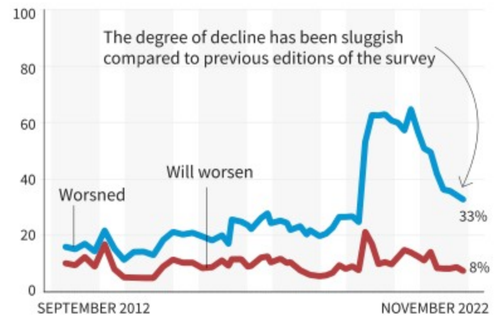


Chart 4: The share of respondents who said that **price levels** increased compared to a year ago and will increase in the next one year

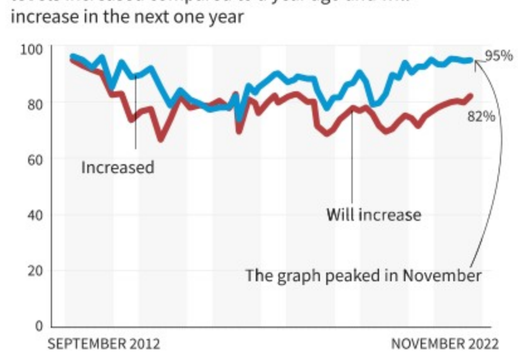
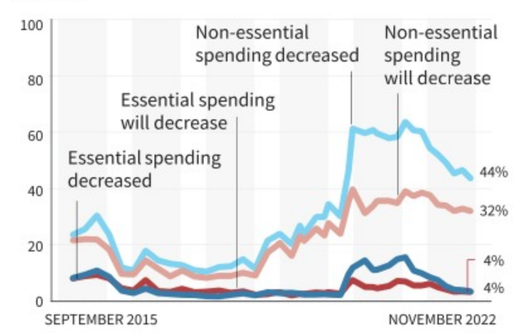


Chart 5: The share of respondents who said **non-essential spending** decreased and will decrease and those who said **essential spending** decreased and will decrease



FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO DECEMBER 12, 1972

Apollo-17 astronauts land on moon

Houston, Dec. 11: Americans landed on the moon to-day for the sixth and perhaps final time in this century. Apollo-17's lunarcraft "Challenger" touched down at 1-25 a.m. IST (Tuesday) in a rugged box canyon for the start of a three-day search for knowledge. Astronauts Eugene Cernan, a navy pilot on his third space flight, and Harrison Schmitt, the first American scientist in space, guided "Challenger" over lunar mountains and down to the crater-pocked floor of the canyon called Taurus-Littrow.

Cernan and Schmitt will spend 75 hours on the moon, make three excursions in an electric car and collect about 50 kg. of rocks. The two astronauts were the 11th and 12th men to set foot on the moon. The other astronaut Evans remained in the command ship "America" mapping the moon from orbit as no one else had. Earlier Cernan and Schmitt moved into "Challenger" at 14-40 GMT (20-10 IST) to begin descent procedures. The two spacecraft separated two-and-a-half-hours later behind the moon on the 12th orbit. "Okay, Houston, check-out complete," said Cernan. "We're looking at "America," the beautiful. Evans reported from the command ship that "Challenger looks real pretty" - the moonship's legs were unfolded like a bird set to land.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO DECEMBER 12, 1922

Empire wireless

London, Dec. 11: The "Daily Telegraph" says there has been talk of the Empire wireless chain for upwards of twelve years and yet practically nothing has been done. Dominions losing hope have made independent arrangements. Australia, South Africa and Canada have taken the matter into their own hands and India will probably adopt a similar course. The present situation should therefore be regarded with deepest regret. The new Government has pledged imperial unity and security and must forge the chain without delay if only in order to strengthen the Empire. The problem must be approached with an open mind and with an implicable purpose of finding a way out of the muddle which is threatening the smooth working of Imperial relations.

From Page One

Stop grading terrorists as good and bad: India

It said that existing and emerging threats call for a renewed collective approach to terrorism.

"Looking at the motivations behind terrorist acts and categorising such acts by intent as political or religious and by ideological motivation will dilute our shared commitment to fighting terrorism," it said.

The concept note voices concern that in recent times, there has been a resurgence of terrorist activities in both range and diversity, as well as in geographical space.

The risk of radicalisation through the internet and social media, and terror financing using cryptocurrencies and crowdfunding platforms, was heightened, particularly during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Member states have, in recent times, also witnessed the use of unmanned aerial systems for the surveillance of targets, trafficking in drugs and arms, it said.

The proposed high-level briefing also aims to provide an opportunity for Council members to build on the recent deliberations of the Counter-Terrorism Committee meeting in Mumbai and Delhi held in late October.

CBI quizzes Kavitha in Delhi liquor policy case

It was not clear if the CBI had recorded her statement, or if it would require her attendance for questioning again.

The Central agency had earlier served notices on Ms. Kavitha under Section 160 (police officer's power to require attendance of witnesses) of the Code of Criminal Procedure to question her and record her statement. Reportedly, the questioning was slated to happen in her office in the lower floor of her residence, in the presence of her lawyer.

The high-profile investigation has sparked a sensation in the State's political circles ever since Ms. Kavitha's name appeared in the November 30 remand report of accused Amit Arora in the liquor row case, filed by the Enforcement Directorate in Delhi. The report had also mentioned that she had changed her cellphones several times over a span of two years.

'BJP's pre-election ploy'

Ms. Kavitha had reacted strongly to the remand report, saying that she was "even ready to go to jail, if need be". She alleged that several raids and notices by Central agencies, as well as the "media leaks", were a "pre-election ploy" by the BJP.

The leaders and cadre of the ruling TRS party, however, were tactful in attributing the Central agency's actions to the Centre. They also took care, leaving no stone unturned, to make Ms. Kavitha feel secure and strong all through the past fortnight.

On Sunday, ahead of her questioning by the CBI, the Banjara Hills area near Ms. Kavitha's residence was covered with pink banners as an expression of solidarity.

India urged to adopt ASEAN consensus

The plan calls for an immediate end to violence in the country; dialogue among all parties; the appointment of a special envoy; humanitarian assistance by ASEAN; and the special envoy's visit to Myanmar to meet with all parties.

"Our message to ASEAN partners is, please support the ASEAN efforts – because if you do differently, then that will not help us be effective and to help Myanmar out of this political crisis," Ms. Marsudi told *The Hindu* when asked about India's policy of direct engagement with the military rulers.

'Support five point consensus'

"We repeat again and again, please respect ASEAN, please support the five point consensus," Ms. Marsudi added, saying that she had last discussed the issue with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar in September on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. Earlier in the year, ASEAN members and the U.S. had also conveyed their concerns to New Delhi and Colombo about their invitation to the Myanmar Foreign Minister for the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) virtual summit in March.

In late November, Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra had visited Nay Pyi Taw, and in a departure from the past, did not meet with members of the deposed political parties. Nor did an official release refer to the ASEAN consensus, which previous releases from the Ministry of External Affairs had mentioned. Government officials have maintained that India's ties with Myanmar are important given that they share a porous border with incursions by militants, and need to engage the military leadership as regional rivals like China do.

Leading the global south

India and Indonesia are expected to strengthen their engagement in the next year given that India has now assumed the presidency of the G-20, where Indonesia is a member of the "troika" as the immediate past president. Indonesia has just assumed chairmanship of the ASEAN grouping as well.

Crypto regulation a key focus area as G-20 finance talks begin tomorrow

Nearly 40 meetings have been planned across the country to 'add significant value to the global economic discourse'; Nirmala Sitharaman and Shaktikanta Das to steer the overall Finance Track

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A coordinated approach to regulating crypto assets, managing debt vulnerabilities and reorienting global financial institutions have been identified as critical focus areas of the Finance Track agenda for India's G-20 Presidency, which will kick off with the first meeting of G-20 finance and central bank deputies in Bengaluru on Tuesday.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das will steer the overall Finance Track during India's G-20 Presidency, with the first meeting of Finance Ministers and central bank Governors of member countries also scheduled to be held in the Karnataka capital from February 23 to 25.

Nearly 40 meetings have been planned under the Finance Track all over the country, with various working groups and four Minister-level meetings that "will endeavour to add significant value to the global economic discourse", officials said.

Money matters: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman with RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, in this file photo.

Combined effort

A globally coordinated approach to unbacked crypto assets, advancing the international taxation agenda, managing global debt vulnerabilities, advancing financial inclusion and productivity gains, financing for climate action and sustainable development goals, and financing "cities of tomorrow" are some of the key issues identified for focussed discussions during these G-20 meetings.

This week's parleys will be co-chaired by Ajay Seth, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, and Michael D. Patra, Deputy Governor of the RBI. Their counterparts from G-20 member countries, and from several other countries and international organisations invited by India, will participate in the two-day meeting.

"The Finance Ministry, after extended consultations, has curated a robust agenda which will ultimately feed into the G-20 leaders' declaration when Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosts the summit next year. We have imbibed the PM Modi's idea in his address at the Bali G-20 summit that 'the need today is that benefits of development are universal and all-inclusive' in the G-20 Finance Track agenda," Mr. Seth said on Sunday.

"We are hopeful the Finance Track will lead to sustainable and inclusive growth for all and bring more resilience to the global economy," he said.

Cultural diplomacy an attempt to restore tradition: Jaishankar

The Hindu Bureau
LUCKNOW

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Sunday said the cultural diplomacy of the Modi government was centred on "restoring our rich traditions for the benefit of the world" and a truly democratic and pluralistic world order must see a full expression of India's heritage, abroad as much as at home.

Mr. Jaishankar, who is on a two-day tour of Varanasi, was addressing an event as part of *Kashi Tamil Sangamam* on 'Contribution of temples to society and nation building'.

The Minister added that temples were keepers of culture and history along with being centres of knowledge and promoters of arts and crafts.

"The cultural diplomacy of the Modi government is focussed on creating, rebuilding and restoring our rich traditions for the benefit of the entire world. This is *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (The World is One Family)," he said.

The External Affairs Minister added that Varanasi would be hosting the G-20 Development Ministers' meeting.

"Kashi is one of the important venues for the G-20 meetings. And one of them, the Development Ministers' meeting that I will chair, will be held here," he said, addressing students and faculty at the Banaras Hindu University (BHU).

> Earlier, the world used to see India and Pakistan on equal terms but not any more and India has become the primary power in the region
>
> **S. JAISHANKAR**
> Minister of External Affairs

India primary power

Mr. Jaishankar was speaking at the university on 'India as a rising power in the changing global world order'. The diplomat-turned-politician said that earlier, the world used to see India and Pakistan on equal terms but not any more, and India had become the primary power in the region.

Police get go-ahead in offensive app case

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) V.K. Saxena has given sanction to prosecute Aumkareshwar Thakur, the main accused in an offensive app case, sources at the Raj Niwas said on Sunday.

The Delhi Police can now prosecute Thakur under Section 196 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which pertains to prosecution for offences against the state and for criminal conspiracy to commit such offence.

Thakur, who studied BCA in Indore, had allegedly created the app and a Twitter handle using which Muslim women were "auctioned" on social media platforms.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (IFSO) K.P.S. Malhotra had earlier said that the accused had admitted to being a member of a group on Twitter where the idea to defame and troll Muslim women was shared.

The police had gathered information on Thakur while interrogating Niraj Bishnoi, 21, believed to be the creator and alleged mastermind behind another such offensive application.

Enforcement agencies stepping up action against pro-Khalistan forces

Devesh K. Pandey
NEW DELHI

A coordinated crackdown on pro-Khalistan elements within and outside the country has started yielding results for the law enforcement organisations, with the National Investigation Agency (NIA) succeeding in making two key arrests this month. About two dozen accused and suspects currently operating from overseas are under the scanner.

The latest arrest made by the NIA is that of alleged terrorist Bikramjit Singh, who was wanted in connection with the September 2019 Tarn Taran bomb blast in Punjab. He was extradited from Vienna in Austria. Two persons were killed in a powerful explosion in a vacant plot on the outskirts of Pandori Gola village in Tarn Taran, leaving two dead and one injured. The three had been digging a pit to retrieve an explosive consignment when the bomb went off.

A day after the arrest, the Sarhali police station in Tarn Taran was targeted using a rocket-propelled grenade late on Friday night. Over the past one year, six such attacks have been carried out at the police and Army establishments in the State, said an official.

The agencies have zeroed in on several suspects and accused in Europe, Canada and the U.S.

Harpreet Singh, who carried a ₹10-lakh reward for his alleged role in the Ludhiana court blast about a year ago, was arrested by the NIA after he landed at the Indira Gandhi International Airport from Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia on December 1. "Persistent attempts are being made by pro-Khalistani banned outfits to foment trouble in Punjab. Huge funds have been channelled from abroad. There is *prima facie* evidence that in the garb of music videos, also being advertised on a popular video sharing platform, violence is being promoted," the official said.

The agencies have zeroed in on several suspects and accused in Europe, Canada and the United States, many among whom run large criminal syndicates in Punjab.

Kashmir DDC bypolls results show BJP making slow but steady progress

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

The results of the District Development Council (DDC) byelections held in December 5 in north Kashmir point to better prospects for the BJP in an otherwise no-go area for the party.

The vote tally at Dragmulla and Hajin has thrown up new political trends, at a time when the parties in the Union Territory are preparing for the first Assembly election since the downgrading of the State of J&K into a Union Territory in 2019. Both these constituencies, in the past, were witness to militant activities and presence in significant numbers.

Though the National Conference-backed candidate won the Dragmulla seat by securing 3,259 votes, the BJP stood fourth and bagged 877, higher than the 746 of the Congress and 612 of Rifat Jan, a candidate backed by the Peoples Democratic Party. Once a bastion of the NC and Sajad Lone's People Conference (PC), the constituency saw the rise of the J&K Apni party, a party floated after August 5, 2019, which secured 1,474 votes.

Exercising franchise: Voters arriving to cast their votes during the District Development Council byelection at Bandipora. PTI

Mudasir Wani, BJP leader and north Kashmir incharge, and Mohammad Anwar Khan, Kupwara district Prabhari, thanked the people of Drugmulla, Kupwara "for casting their votes in favour of the BJP". "We hail all the 877 voters for their valour, bravery and for voting in large numbers in the DDC repoll. They came out to vote for an inclusive and progressive democracy," they said in a joint statement.

The split in the vote share reflected fast emerging new players in places where the contest was once limited to two or three regional parties prior to August 5, 2019, when the Centre ended J&K's special constitutional position.

In the Hajin constituency, once a hub of Jamaat-e-Islami and the NC, the BJP surprised all by securing 387 votes. The BJP stood fourth with the J&K Apni Party securing 2,606 votes and grabbing the seat from the powerful players, the NC and the PC. The BJP secured more votes than Ghulam Nabi Azad's Democratic Azad Party (DAP), which bagged just 315 votes.

The constituency saw a triangular contest between the NC, the Peoples Conference and the Apni Party, a new entrant in the electoral scene of J&K. The election body's decision to declare 813 votes null and void also surprised all the political parties. However, the district administration described the cancellations as per the rules.

Unlike the 2020 DDC election, the Peoples Alliance for the Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) seemed to have ended its poll pact and the four parties in the amalgam were seen supporting different candidates and not putting up a joint face.

The BJP has been working on small steps in Kashmir, where the party's penetration in the face of alienation and prolonged conflict will not be a cake walk.

Speaking in Kupwara just days ahead of the byelection, the party's J&K general secretary, Ashok Koul, said the "political environment was now in complete favour of the BJP in the upcoming Assembly election in J&K". He credited the growing popularity of the BJP to "the works done in the short period of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government compared to the 70 years of Congress rule".

Was attacked by aides of Ashish, says witness in Lakhimpur case

The Hindu Bureau
LUCKNOW

One of the main witnesses in the Lakhimpur Kheri violence case, Prabjot Singh, has alleged that close aides of the main accused, Ashish Mishra, son of Union Minister Ajay Mishra Teni, were behind an attack on him and his brother.

However, the Lakhimpur Kheri police denied the allegations saying that the fight took place over some other issue and had nothing to do with Mr. Ashish or the 2021 violence case. "The matter was not related to the violence. A fight broke out between two groups during a *Mundan* [tonsuring] ceremony," said a police official on the condition of anonymity. The Superintendent of Police was unavailable for comment.

Last week, a Lakhimpur Kheri court framed charges against Mr. Ashish and 13 others in connection with the killing of four farmers and a journalist on October 3 last year.

It is alleged that vehicles belonging to the Union Minister's convoy mowed down farmers who were protesting against U.P. Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya's visit.

APPEAL

Baby Kojith is 2 years old boy diagnosed with B Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. He is in urgent need of chemotherapy for 3 years which cost around **Rs.8,00,000/-**. His family hails from a poor socio-economic class. We request kind hearted individuals to donate for the child's treatment at Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai. The donations sent through Ch/D.D/NEFT Transfer & GOOGLE PAY (Canara Bank, Nungambakkam Branch, A/C No.60182010063310, IFSC No. CNRB0016018) favouring **WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE** is exempted under 80G IT.

All correspondence is done through **WWS,** Regd. Public Charitable Trust, **Flat No.GF 1, Corddel Apartments, O.No.13, N.No.29, Pycrofts Garden Lane, Chennai - 600006. Ph: 044-42137401/28235324/7338978027. E Mail ID: womenswelfaresyndicate@gmail.com** Website: www.womenswelfaresyndicate.org

WWS

19 Assemblies have less than 10% women MLAs: govt.

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Women representation in Parliament and most State Legislatures across the country is below 15% with 19 Assemblies having less than 10% women lawmakers, according to government data.

The State legislatures which have more than 10% women lawmakers are Bihar (10.7%), Chhattisgarh (14.44%), Haryana (10%), Jharkhand (12.35%), Punjab (11.11%), Rajasthan (12%), Uttarakhand (11.43%), Uttar Pradesh (11.66%), West Bengal (13.7%) and Delhi (11.43%). According to the data presented in the Lok Sabha on December 9, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Odisha, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu and Telangana have less than 10% women legislators.

Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu takes oath as CM of Himachal Pradesh

Mukesh Agnihotri, who was among the contenders for the top post, assumes office as Deputy Chief Minister; the names of the two leaders were finalised after hectic parleys; Cong. president Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul, Priyanka attend swearing-in

Vikas Vasudeva
CHANDIGARH

Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Sunday took oath as the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, days after the Congress edged the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) out of power in the Assembly election.

Mukesh Agnihotri, the Leader of the Opposition in the outgoing Assembly, was also sworn in. He is the new Deputy Chief Minister.

Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar administered the oath of office and secrecy to Mr. Sukhu and Mr. Agnihotri at the swearing-in held at the Ridge in Shimla.

Congress leaders, including party president Mallikarjun Kharge, former president Rahul Gandhi, general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and senior party leader K.C. Venugopal, were present.

New leadership: Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu being sworn in as the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh by Governor Rajendra Arlekar in Shimla on Sunday. PTI

After hectic deliberations over the names of several contenders to the Chief Minister's post, the party high command on Saturday announced Mr. Sukhu's name for the post.

Mr. Sukhu, a former State president of the party, is the MLA-elect for Nadaun. Mr. Agnihotri, who is the outgoing Congress Legislature Party leader in the Assembly, has been elected from the Haroli constituency in Una district.

Strong backing

Mr. Sukhu succeeded against other contenders for the Chief Minister's post, including Pratibha Singh, widow of former Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh, and Mr. Agnihotri, as a majority of the MLAs extended support for him. To pacify the rival camps, a formula was devised in which Mr. Sukhu was declared the Chief Minister and Mr. Agnihotri the Deputy Chief Minister.

The Congress won 40 seats in the election, while the BJP won 25. Independent candidates won three seats.

Sukhu, an astute politician's incredible journey to the top post

Vikas Vasudeva
CHANDIGARH

Himachal Pradesh saw a symbolic moment in State politics on Sunday as senior Congress leader Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, the 58-year-old son of a bus driver, took oath as the Chief Minister. His journey to the top post in the State, in spite of the fact that he does not hail from a political family, is nothing short of an incredible feat.

Soon after assuming charge, Mr. Sukhu, who comes from a humble family background in rural Himachal Pradesh, made it clear that his government would work in a transparent manner, providing honest governance. He assured the people that all the guarantees and promises given by the Congress in the run-up to the elections would be implemented.

Known in political circles as a modest and soft-spoken yet assertive leader, Mr. Sukhu was famed for being willing to speak his mind on matters within and outside the party over the 40 years of his political journey.

On several issues, he was often at loggerheads with Virbhadra Singh, a Congress stalwart in Himachal Pradesh and six-time Chief Minister.

An astute politician, Mr. Sukhu is learnt to have a close relationship with Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra.

The new CM of Himachal had been a councillor of the Shimla Municipal Corporation

Rising through ranks

Mr. Sukhu's father, the late Rasil Singh, was a bus driver. In his early years, Mr. Sukhu, who resided in the Chotta Shimla area, ran a milk supply corner to support his family.

A law graduate from Himachal Pradesh University, he started his political journey by jumping into student politics at the university in 1984. He joined the National Students' Union of India (NSUI), the student wing of the Congress, and later became the NSUI's State president between 1989 and 1995. He then served as general secretary of the Himachal Pradesh Youth Congress, becoming its president in 1998 and holding the position for a full decade. Rising through the ranks, Mr. Sukhu became president of the Himachal Pradesh Congress Committee in 2013. Interestingly – and a feat in itself – he has been president of the NSUI, the Youth Congress, and the HPCC. Mr. Sukhu was elected councillor of the Shimla Municipal Corporation for two terms – 1992 to 1997 and 1997 to 2002.

Modi slams Opposition parties for indulging in 'shortcut politics'

Shoumojit Banerjee
PUNE

Slamming the Opposition parties for their "shortcut politics", Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday exhorted taxpayers to expose such politicians who were trying to sabotage the economy for their own selfish purposes.

"A country cannot move ahead by shortcuts. Parties who adopt this shortcut are the country's biggest enemies, whose aim is to merely come to power by making hollow promises. At a time when India is working on objectives for the next 25 years, these political parties, out of their own selfishness, want to destroy the economy," Mr. Modi said during the inauguration of an All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Nagpur. Mr. Modi alleged that the previous governments had sacrificed taxpayers' money for the sake of vote-bank politics and corruption.

Infrastructure boost: Narendra Modi beating a drum (dhol) during the inauguration of the Nagpur-Shirdi highway on Sunday. PTI

The Prime Minister launched and inaugurated a slew of development projects worth ₹75,000 crore. Notable among them is the first phase of the Samruddhi Mahamarg, or the Nagpur-Mumbai Super Communication Expressway project, named after Shiv Sena founder Bal Thackeray.

"The launch of projects today is evidence of the fast pace with which the double-engine government is working in Maharashtra. This will give a boost to the economic prospects of farmers and open new industries besides creating new job avenues," Mr. Modi said.

The PM's address was also designed to strengthen the government of Eknath Shinde and Devendra Fadnavis ahead of the Maharashtra civic polls.

"India cannot afford to lose the opportunity offered by the 'fourth industrial revolution' today. At one time in the recent past, even South Korea was a poor country and Singapore was an ordinary island nation but they changed their fortunes owing to adoption of superior infrastructure. These countries did not resort to 'shortcut' politics by looting their taxpayers' money," he said castigating the "anti-development" and "vote bank" policies of the Opposition parties.

Bill seeks EC role in parties' internal polling

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress MP Manish Tewari has introduced a private member's Bill in the Lok Sabha seeking the Election Commission to be made responsible for regulating and monitoring the internal operations of political parties in the country.

Calling the internal functioning of most political parties "opaque and ossified", the Bill seeks to provide the EC with the necessary wherewithal to regulate the internal functioning of all political parties registered with it and to withdraw their recognition as national or State parties if they fail to comply with the directions of the Commission.

The Bill, named 'Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2022', also seeks to insulate the appointment process of Election Commissioners and mandates that they should not be eligible for post-retirement jobs.

The proposed legislation seeks insertion of a new Article, 328 (A), to empower the EC to regulate, monitor and supervise the elections in registered political parties in accordance with their respective constitutions until a model internal code is prescribed by the EC. "It shall be incumbent upon all registered political parties to incorporate the model election code into their respective constitutions after its formulation by the Election Commission," the Bill says.

It seeks appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and Commissioners to be appointed by a panel of the Prime Minister, Home Minister, Leader of the Opposition or floor leaders in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, Chief Justice of India and two senior-most judges of the SC.

INBRIEF

Modi opens Phase 1 of Mopa International Airport in Goa

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday inaugurated the first phase of the greenfield international airport at Mopa in north Goa. He said the airport would be named Manohar International Airport after former Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar. He targeted the previous governments, saying they had adopted a vote bank approach for decades instead of finding what people needed in terms of public amenities. The Mopa airport is the second international airport in Goa , which is operated as a city enclave from the naval air station *INS Hansa*. PTI

Gupta resigns as Delhi BJP chief after defeat in MCD polls

BJP Delhi unit president Adesh Gupta tendered his resignation from the post on Sunday, days after the party faced a defeat in the municipal Corporation polls. City unit vice-president Virendra Sachdeva has been appointed as the acting president. "The party did not get the expected results in the MCD elections. Taking moral responsibility for the defeat, I have resigned from the post," Mr. Gupta said, speaking to *ANI*. "Adesh Gupta's resignation from the post of Delhi president is accepted on the directions of BJP president Jagat Prakash Nadda," party national general secretary Arun Singh said.

BSP chief alleges 'internal collusion' between SP and BJP

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) president Mayawati on Sunday raised doubts on the Samajwadi Party's success in Mainpuri, and the BJP's victory in Rampur alleging 'internal collusion' between both the parties. "The SP succeeded in the Mainpuri bypoll, but the BJP win in the Rampur Assembly byelection was a matter of debate whether all this was not the result of the internal collusion of the SP and the BJP," said Ms. Mayawati on Twitter. The four-time Chief Minister asked the Muslim community to ponder over the question, so the community could be saved from being cheated in the elections.

Amid defection speculation, AAP MLA-elect praises Modi

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA-elect Bhupat Bhayani, who won from the Visavadar seat in Gujarat, on Sunday praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi amid speculation that he might join the BJP. However, in a video message shared by the AAP media wing, Mr. Bhayani said he was a "committed worker" of the AAP. Mr. Bhayani shifted to the AAP after the BJP fielded Congress turncoat Harshad Ribadia, who was the then sitting MLA, from Visavadar.

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e-Tender Notice

The APEPDCL is inviting e-tenders from the eligible bidders for the following works

1) Bid/RFPNo.CGM/Projects/APEPDCL/RDSS/07/2022-23- "Design, Supply and Installation of Loss Reduction distribution Infrastructure works for Agricultural Feeders segregation & Bifurcation of overloaded feeders in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram& Visakhapatnam Districts (Old) of APEPDCL on Partial Turn Key Basis under RDSS"

2) Bid/RFPNo.CGM/Projects/APEPDCL/RDSS/08/2022-23- "Design, Supply and Installation of Loss Reduction distribution Infrastructure works for Agricultural Feeders segregation & Bifurcation of overloaded feeders in East Godavari and West Godavari Districts (Old) of APEPDCL on Partial Turn Key Basis under RDSS"

3) Bid/RFPNo.CGM/Projects/APEPDCL/RDSS-UGC Works/09/2022-23- "Design, Supply and Installation of UG Cabling and Covered Conductor works in Disaster Prone areas of Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, Rajahmahendravaram & Eluru Circles of APEPDCL under RDSS"

All the interested bidders may visit **www.apeprocurement.gov.in** to view details of the tender and time schedule of the above works from **15.12.2022 at 12:00Hrs** onwards.

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NDTV to give two board seats to Adani group firm

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

NDTV has offered billionaire Gautam Adani's group two seats on its board of directors for the pre-open offer, 29.18% shareholding, the ports-to-energy conglomerate had acquired in the broadcaster, according to a stock exchange filing.The group acquired a 29.18% stake in NDTV by buying a company backed by the television network's founders, Radhika Roy and Prannoy Roy.

Think out of the box to solve problem of vacancies in HCs, says House panel

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Amid a stand-off between the government and the Supreme Court Collegium over the appointment of judges, a parliamentary panel has asked the executive and the judiciary to come up with "out of box thinking" to deal with the "perennial problem" of vacancies in High Courts.

The department-related Standing Committee on Law and Personnel, in its report tabled in Parliament on Thursday, said it is not in agreement with the comments of the Department of Justice in the Union Law Ministry that "time for filling up of vacancies of judges in the higher judiciary cannot be indicated".

Sushil Kumar Modi

The timeline has been drawn in the *Second Judges Case* and also in the Memorandum of Procedure (MOP) regarding the appointment of judges, it pointed out. "But regrettably, those timelines are not adhered to by both, the judiciary and the executive, which is leading to delay in filling up of the vacancies," it said. The committee said as per the data provided by the government, as on December 31, 2021, there were three High Courts of Telangana, Patna and Delhi where vacancies were more than 50% and 10 HCs where vacancies are more than 40% of their respective sanctioned strength. "These all are large States, where judge to population ratio is already skewed and such level of vacancies is a matter of deep concern," the panel headed by BJP leader Sushil Kumar Modi observed. The government and the judiciary "should come up with out of box thinking to deal with this perennial problem of vacancies in the HCs", it said.

There are 25 High Courts. As on December 5, 778 judges are working in the High Courts against the strength of 1,108.

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Rc.No.11495/EDP/2022 **NOTICE INVITING TENDER** Date : 08.12.2022

1.	Name of the Work	**Supply, Installation, Integration, Testing, Commissioning Maintenance and Project Management (SIITCM & PM)** of **Smart Classes** in Government Schools and Command & Control Centre in Tamilnadu State.
2.	Sale period of Tender document	On all working days from **12.12.2022** to **18.01.2023** between **10.00 AM** to **05.00 PM**
3.	Pre-Bid meeting date & time place	**28.12.2022** at **3.30 PM** in **Tamilnadu Textbook and Educational Services Corporation, Chennai - 6.**
4.	Last Date and Time for Submission of Tender	**19.01.2023 upto 3.30 PM**
5.	Tender opening time & date	**19.01.2023 at 4.00 PM in Tamilnadu Textbook and Educational Services Corporation, Chennai - 6.**
6.	Tender document can be downloaded at free of cost from the website	**a) http://www.textbookcorp.tn.gov.in** **b) http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in**

Managing Director,
Tender Inviting Authority
Tamilnadu Textbook and
Educational Services Corporation, Chennai-6.

DIPR/5457/TENDER/2022

"சோதனை கடந்து சுதந்திரம் அடைந்தோம், சாதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம்."

INBRIEF

'Human rights to be at centre of environmental concerns'

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has said that he insisted publicly on the importance of guaranteeing civic space and protection of human rights defenders as well as environmental activists during his recent visits to India and Vietnam. "One of the key messages I clearly got and that I also tried to convey very clearly is that human rights must be at the centre of all environmental concerns and namely, the work of the CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity)," Mr. Guterres said during a press conference at the COP15 Biodiversity Conference in Montreal. He was responding to a question on governments cracking down on environmental protests. PTI

Tripura BJP leaders arrive in Delhi for discussion on polls

Top BJP leaders from Tripura rushed to New Delhi after the party high command summoned them for urgent consultations on the upcoming State Assembly election. Chief Minister Manik Saha, former Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb, Union Minister of State Pratima Bhoumik, Deputy Chief Minister Jishnu Dev Varma and other senior leaders are now camping at the national capital. Sources said the State leaders would meet the Central leaders. Dr. Saha on Sunday met party general secretary B.L. Santhosh at the latter's office. The Assembly election in Tripura is expected to be held in February.

Russia remains India's top oil supplier in November

Russia has, for the second month in a row, remained India's top oil supplier in November, surpassing traditional sellers Iraq and Saudi Arabia, according to data from energy cargo tracker Vortexa. Russia, which made up for just 0.2% of all oil imported by India in the year to March 31, 2022, supplied 9,09,403 barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil to India in November. It now makes up for more than a fifth of India's oil supplies. According to Vortexa, India imported 8,61,461 bpd of oil from Iraq in November and 5,70,922 bpd from Saudi Arabia. The U.S. was India's fourth largest supplier at 4,05,525 bpd. PTI

Record 1,081 commercial pilot licences issued so far this year

Aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued 1,081 commercial pilot licences in 2022, which is the highest for any year in the last one decade, according to official data. The record issuance of Commercial Pilot Licences (CPLs) also comes at a time when the country's civil aviation sector is recovering at a fast pace after being hit by the coronavirus pandemic. A senior official at the DGCA on Sunday said that 1,081 CPLs had been issued in 2022 till December 6 and the number was likely to cross 1,100 by year-end. This was also the highest for any year since 2011, as per the data. In 2014, the number of CPLs issued stood at 896, while the count was at 862 in 2021. PTI

'India needs policies which focus on job-rich growth and equality to move forward'

International Labour Organisation Director-General asks member countries to channel collective efforts to achieve social justice, decent work for all

INTERVIEW

Gilbert F. Houngbo

A. M. Jigeesh

In his concluding remarks at the 17th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting (APRM) of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Singapre on Friday, ILO Director-General and former Prime Minister of Togo, Gilbert F. Houngbo, said he looked forward to continuing the consultations towards the development of the Global Coalition for Social Justice. He asked the member countries to ensure greater policy coherence among multilateral, regional and national stakeholders, and to channel the collective efforts and resources to achieve social justice and decent work for all. Developing institutional frameworks to support transitions towards formality and decent work, to strengthen the foundations for social and employment protection and resilience, and to revitalise productivity growth and skills are also important according to him. In an exclusive interaction at the sidelines of the event, Mr. Houngbo said India should focus on job-rich growth and equality to address the crisis created by COVID-19 pandemic and other issues such as the Ukraine situation. Excerpts:

What do you think is the major outcome of this APRM?

We have to consider the most pressing issues in the region. The region needs to work more on the ratifications of the ILO standards and to implement them. There are several countries in the region where workers are facing problems. People are disappearing, people are being jailed. We need to find a better way to balance the

need for economic growth and respect for minimum right and protection for workers. This has come up in this meeting. With this, of course, the underlining issue of social dialogue was also taken up, along with issues of migrant workers from receiving and sending countries was discussed.

The participants were focused on deepening the debate on those issues and sharing their experiences so that countries can look forward to implement the suggestions of this meeting. The region is fast growing economically. But, frankly, I feel that the social side is really lagging behind. This has a negative and direct impact on inequality.

There were two recent ILO reports flagging the problem of decrease in wages and the impact of inflation. What are your policy prescriptions for the member countries to face these multiple crises?

Obviously, the policies have to be adopted by each country according to its conditions. I am very careful not to give an impression of a top-down approach. Investment in job-rich and employment-rich sectors is the way forward.

Similarly, inflation is a big concern for all of us. We need price stability. Central banks are tightening the monitory space. When we are making these monitory restrictions, we have to look at the impact of these restrictions on the job market. We have to make sure that such decisions should help control inflation but they do not worsen the precarious situation.

The situation in Ukraine was another major point for discussion. What are your views?

The whole globe is already suffering from Ukraine situation. Our first point would always be calling for cessation of hostilities and that everybody should be around the table for negotiations. My first call would be to stop the war and try to find an acceptable solution.

Secondly, Ukraine situation, coupled with other crises, is causing inflation and energy crisis. Those who are paying the price for this are those who have nothing to do with this crisis. Those who are left behind, particularly because of the inflation, are low paid citizens. They are forced to spend a big amount of the proportion of their salaries for basic needs. I am very worried about fertilizer situation and the risk of food security. More than that, the whole danger is that the multiple crises, including the war in Ukraine, push much more people below the poverty line.

India, too, suffered due to this pandemic. How do you see the situation in India?

Countries such as India are recovering from the pandemic. As a G-20 country, India is very well-placed to move forward. By focusing on job-rich growth and equality, India can move forward further.

I am very worried about the consequences of COVID-19 in India. If the recovery is stalled because of inflation and other reasons, I am worried that it might increase inequality in a country such as India. India needs policies focusing on job-rich growth and equality.

'Clean Ganga' changes course to conservation, tourism, livelihood

Tourism Ministry to prepare comprehensive plan for developing tourism circuits along the Ganga in line with *Arth Ganga*, organic farming and cultural activities; exhibitions and fairs have been planned in 75 towns along the main stem of the river

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Marking a shift in emphasis, the Union government's flagship *Namami Gange* programme, conceived to improve the sanitation levels in the Ganga, is now geared towards conservation, tourism and providing livelihoods.

At a meeting on December 8 of the top body tasked with coordinating *Namami Ganga* activities and chaired by Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, the thrust of decisions focused on having the Tourism Ministry develop a "comprehensive plan" for developing tourism circuits along the Ganga in line with *Arth Ganga*, organic farming and cultural activities.

Arth Ganga, or harnessing economic potential from the Ganga, follows from a directive by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in December 2019, after chairing a similar meeting of the Ganga taskforce.

Myriad objectives: Since 2014, when the cleaning of the Ganga was launched as a marquee government programme, close to ₹30,000 crore had been sanctioned for various projects. PTI

Proceedings of the meeting suggest that along with developing "tourism circuits", the Ministry was planning exhibitions and fairs in 75 towns along the main stem of the river; the Agriculture Ministry was taking steps to build organic farming and natural farming corridors; the Urban Affairs Ministry was focused on mapping drains and solid waste management, and the Environment Ministry was scaling up afforestation and conservation efforts to protect the Gangetic river dolphin.

Asok Kumar, Director, National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), said in a statement that in the past six months, several workshops and visits were organised for farmers who were being "nudged and sensitised" to shift to "natural farming".

In States, the focus would be expeditiously completing projects and every Ganga district was expected to develop a scientific plan and health card for at least 10 wetlands and adopt policies for reuse of treated water and other by-products.

Since 2014, when the cleaning of the Ganga was launched as a marquee government programme, close to ₹30,000 crore had been sanctioned for various projects, including building and improving sewers and river rejuvenation activities.

Updated estimates from the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) suggest that of 408 projects sanctioned under the programme, 228 have been completed, 132 are "in progress", and the rest in various stages of tendering.

NESO holds 'black day' to mark three years of CAA

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

The North East Students' Organisation (NESO), comprising eight major student bodies in the region, observed a 'black day' on Sunday to mark the third anniversary of the passage of the contentious Citizenship (Amendment) Bill.

"This observation is to give a message to the Government of India that we are against this Citizenship (Amendment) Act of 2019, and to remind our people of yet another political injustice that the Centre perpetrated on the indigenous people of the northeast," NESO chairman Samuel B. Jyrwa said.

The Assam Jatiya Parishad, a regional political party, said that they observed it as the day the Centre "cheated" Northeast India three years ago.

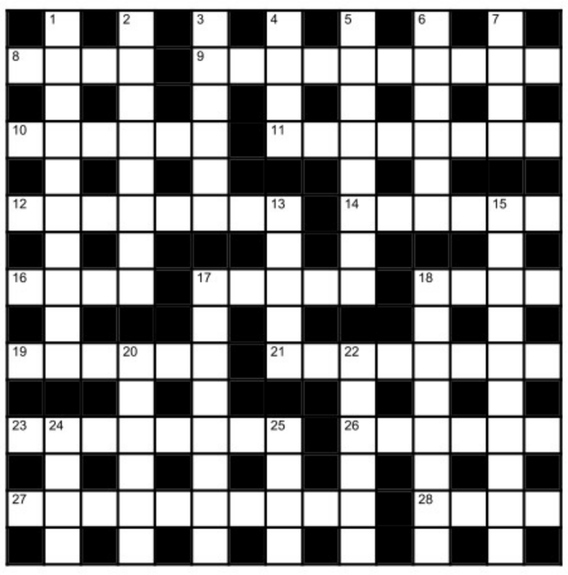
"Our members and supporters staged a two-hour protest against the draconian CAA," Jagadish Bhuyan, the party's general secretary, said.

TH CROSSWORD + 13734

(set by Incognito)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

8 Girl goes away from tomb for party (4)
9 Perhaps, blonde wrongly hid airfare (4-6)
10 Monarch exiles new boxing champ? Capital! (6)
11 Surround funny cleric following nurse (8)
12 Uncontrollable fear about starting to dispense expired medication in very wide spread disease (8)
14 Cover head of state with PM of UK who decimalised the pound (6)
16 Enjoyment with daughter's pay (4)
17 Store in jade pots (5)
18 Left in container for family (4)
19 Informal word used to offer wager from Baron Teach at sea (6)
21 Made up "Indian let out gas" (8)
23 Guess friend is after wonderful site (8)
26 American president on returning Indian tribe (6)
27 Detective alters every tape about setter (7,3)
28 Top artiste evicted from expatriates arrangement (4)

Down

1 Accurate representation includes Rhode Island cartoon (10)
2 Vehemently asked, "Dead men walk around dead end?" (8)
3 Attest: "A couple of females ignored romantic man at first" (6)
4 Ten cent bet lost in bedtime scrap (4)
5 Solidly built chest kit is assembled (8)
6 Cree, if excited, can be ferocious (6)
7 Good source of water (4)
13 About male descendent leaving prison island (5)
15 Brand's prowling man-eaters consume Duke (5,5)
17 Italian poet-philosopher took possession of one American jewel (8)
18 Mineral brain can synthesize? (8)
20 Vichy organisation admits Victor's nag (6)
22 Church official from Hanover, Germany (6)
24 Hairdresser firm's has a low level employee without rights (4)
25 Saw journalist holding first two parts of yearbook (4)

SUDOKU

4			7	3	6			
		2		1	5			
					8		1	5
3			1			8		9
7				5				1
6		1			4			3
5	3		6					
			5	4		9		
			8	9	1			6

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

D	E	D	M	S	A	H		
MOON		REACT		PEAT				
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BENIGN		ALIMENTS						
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MUSHROOM		EARNED						
N	E	A	N	V				
STORMED		STOOPED						
I	S	R	U	N				
REPENT		EDENTATE						
R	O	T	X	L				
STRAINER		ANIMAL						
A	S	I	E	C	V	G		
FLEE		ADAPT		EARL				
E	D	N	T	S	D	A		

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

8	7	2	6	3	1	5	9	4
9	3	1	4	5	8	7	6	2
4	6	5	7	2	9	3	1	8
7	2	8	5	9	4	6	3	1
1	5	4	8	6	3	9	2	7
3	9	6	2	1	7	4	8	5
6	1	7	3	8	5	2	4	9
2	4	9	1	7	6	8	5	3
5	8	3	9	4	2	1	7	6

FAITH

The Lord of Kanchikshetra

Of the five types of His manifestations – Para, Vyuha, Vibhava, Archa and Antaryami – God relishes the Archa form the most. In Archavatara, the worship of God by celestials and siddhas, is called 'Saiddham'. Worship by sages is called 'Aarsham'. Ordinary human beings worship by building temples to Him and call Him by different names. In the same Archavatara, one more form is called 'Swayam Vyaktha' – God emerging by Himself at His cherished desire with or without assigning reasons.

Srirangam, Tirupati, Badrinath, Srimushnam, Vaanamamalai and Kanchi are some of the swayam vyaktha kshethras. God Vishnu had emerged as Lord Varadaraja from the yagna performed by Brahma in Kanchi. The very name Varada signifies one who gives abundantly to all. It denotes the great quality of His granting boons, and worship of that Lord will fulfil our desires.

In thretha yuga, Lord Varada was worshipped by Gajendra, said Sri Anantha Padmanabhachariar Swamy in a discourse. Brahaspathi, the preceptor of all celestials, worshipped Him in Dwapara yuga, and Sri Ananthazhwan worshipped Him in Kali yuga.

If mundane thoughts fill our mind, we cannot realise God. In the Bhagvad Gita, Lord Krishna says to Arjuna that it is difficult to bring the mind under control but possible with continuous practice. Just as how the unseen ghee is hidden in milk and obtained after various processes, we have to process our mind to realise Him. Of the seven holy cities that give liberation, Kanchi is the most important and "I surrender unto the divine feet of Lord Varadaraja," says Swami Vedanta Desika.

PRISTINA

North Kosovo witnesses high tension as Serbs block roads

AFP

Tensions were high in northern Kosovo, with Serbs blocking roads as shots and explosions rang out overnight. The blockade happened a day after the Serbian President said he would ask the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Kosovo to permit the deployment of Serb troops in the Serb-populated north of Kosovo. AP

WASHINGTON

Japanese start-up launches historic moon mission with help of SpaceX

AP

A Japanese start-up's spacecraft was launched to the moon on Sunday in the country's first-ever lunar mission and the first of its kind by a private company. The launch was carried out by Elon Musk's SpaceX at Cape Canaveral in the U.S. State of Florida after two postponements for additional pre-flight checks. AFP

ISLAMABAD

Six killed in Balochistan province as Afghan Border Forces open fire

REUTERS

At least six Pakistanis were killed and 17 injured on Sunday when Afghan border troops resorted to "unprovoked and indiscriminate fire" across the border into Balochistan's Chaman district, the Army said. The military said heavy weapons including artillery and mortars were used in the firing by Afghan forces. PTI

WASHINGTON

NASA's Orion capsule splashes down in Pacific after lunar mission

AFP

NASA's Orion space capsule splashed down safely in the Pacific on Sunday, completing the Artemis-1 mission — a more than 25-day journey around the moon. After hurtling through the earth's atmosphere at a speed of 40,000 kmph, the uncrewed capsule floated down to the water with the help of three parachutes. AFP

'New COVID wave in China could last for three months'

Country's top epidemiologist urges people to take booster shots, and says the situation on the mainland was somewhat better than in Hong Kong; however, it has to negotiate a difficult winter

Ananth Krishnan
BEIJING

China's current wave of COVID-19 cases, following the recent easing of pandemic restrictions, is seeing a "rapid surge" and the country can expect to see a return to normalcy only after the spring of next year, top epidemiologist and government advisor Zhong Nanshan told State media.

Following Wednesday's easing of pandemic restrictions, including a stop to mass testing, lockdowns and other measures under the earlier "zero-COVID" policy, Chinese cities are seeing a rapid spread of cases.

The Chinese capital on Sunday saw many residents queue outside fever clinics for medicines, although most cases reported so far have been mild. Streets remained empty despite the opening measures because of residents' concern over contracting COVID after three years of living under the zero-COVID policy.

In recent days, top experts have taken to State media to convey to people that the Omicron variant was mild and most people should stay home and isolate, rather than crowd clinics and hospitals. The messaging marks a stark shift from an earlier policy of forcibly quarantining all positive cases and close contacts in government-run facilities, with Beijing finally abandoning its pursuit of zero-COVID facing growing economic costs and rising public anger.

Pall of gloom: A person in PPE waits at the waiting hall of a railway station in Hubei in China on Sunday. REUTERS

Estimated normalcy

"I was asked when our lives can return to where we were in 2019. My view is that in the first half of next year after March," Mr. Zhong was quoted as telling State media in the city of Guangzhou, reported the *South China Morning Post*. "Although I can't guarantee it, the trend says it should be around that time."

The current concern in China is the large number of the elderly unvaccinated population and whether Chinese cities will see mass deaths as was seen in Hong Kong earlier this year. On Friday, the government announced a "tiered" policy to classify all older residents according to risk to ensure access to treatment for those at higher risk.

Mr. Zhong urged people to take booster shots, and pointed out the situation on the mainland was somewhat better placed than Hong Kong with more than two-thirds of the 250 million people above 60 having had the three doses needed to prevent serious cases, compared with 20% in Hong Kong at the time of its wave in February.

Relaxations to continue

Meanwhile, China's Premier Li Keqiang said the country "will keep advancing high-level opening up and steadily expand institutional opening up," following a meeting in eastern China with six heads of multilateral institutions including President of the World Bank Group David Malpass, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund Kristalina Georgieva, and Director-General of the World Trade Organisation Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala. He said he expected "growth to rebound" with the changes in the country's COVID-19 response.

The country, however, first has to negotiate a difficult winter and the first wave of cases following its opening from zero-COVID, which is likely to see vast swathes of the population contract the virus for the first time and pressure on its healthcare system.

Ukraine attacks occupied Melitopol, Kherson shelling by Russia kills two

Reuters
KYIV

Ukraine attacked occupied Melitopol in the country's southeast on Saturday evening, the Russian-installed and exiled Ukrainian authorities of the strategically located city said.

The pro-Moscow authorities said a missile attack killed two persons and wounded 10, while the exiled mayor said scores of "invaders" were killed.

Reuters could not independently verify the reports of the attacks or deaths.

"Air defence systems destroyed two missiles, four reached their targets," Yevgeny Balitsky, the Moscow-appointed Governor of the occupied part of the Zaporizhzhia region, said on the Telegram messaging app.

He said a "recreation centre" where people were dining was destroyed in the Ukrainian attack with HIMARS missiles.

The exiled mayor, Ivan Fedorov, said on his Telegram channel that the attack hit a church that Russians had turned into a gathering place.

HIMARS multiple rocket launchers have been among Ukraine's most effective weapons in the war, delivering precision fire on hundreds of targets, including Russian command posts. On Friday, the U.S. said it was sending more aid to Kyiv to strengthen its air defences and defeat drones.

Remainders of war: Ukrainian children play at an abandoned checkpoint in Kherson in southern Ukraine. AP

Russia's Defence Ministry on Sunday said its air defence forces had shot down five HIMARS-fired rockets in the past 24 hours near the cities of Donetsk and Melitopol.

Meanwhile, two persons were killed and another five wounded after Russian troops shelled the southern Ukrainian region of Kherson, the governor said on Sunday.

The city of Kherson was in November recaptured by Ukrainian forces.

In the Black Sea city of Odessa, emergency shutdowns were continuing following Russian drone attacks, Sergiy Bratchuk, spokesman for the regional administration, said on Sunday.

(with AFP inputs)

High-level U.S. envoys to visit China in an attempt to repair ties

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

The U.S. government is sending its first high-level delegation to China since a pledge made last month by Chinese leader Xi Jinping and U.S. President Joe Biden to repair frayed relations.

Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Daniel Kritenbrink will join National Security Council Senior Director for China and Taiwan Laura Rosenberger on the December 11-14 trip.

The two will visit China, South Korea and Japan.

In China, Mr. Kritenbrink will follow up on Mr. Biden's meeting in Bali last month with Mr. Xi in which the pair pledged "to continue responsibly managing the competition between our two countries and to explore potential areas of cooperation", the State Department said.

The meeting will also lay the groundwork for U.S. Secretary of State Blinken's visit to China in 2023

Mr. Kritenbrink will also prepare for Secretary of State Antony Blinken's visit to China in early 2023.

In their Bali meeting, the two leaders discussed issues, including Taiwan's future, U.S. restrictions on Chinese high-tech imports and China's moves to expand its influence around the world.

Erdogan calls on Putin to establish Syrian corridor

Associated Press
ISTANBUL

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan called for a 30-kilometre security corridor on Turkey's border with Syria in a phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Mr. Erdogan's office said on Sunday.

2019 agreement

Referring to Kurdish militants that Ankara considers terrorists, Mr. Erdogan reiterated the "importance and urgency" of creating the corridor in northern Syria in accordance with a 2019 agreement between Turkey and Russia, the statement added.

The call came three weeks after Turkey launched air and artillery strikes in Syria and Iraq in response to a bomb attack in Istanbul on November 13 that killed six persons.

The Turkish government has blamed the bombing on the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, and its Syrian affiliate the People's Protection Units, or YPG.

The PKK has waged a 38-year insurgency against Turkey that has led to the loss of tens of thousands of lives. It is listed as a terrorist organisation by Turkey, the U.S. and the European Union.

The call between Ms. Erdogan and Mr. Putin follows a visit to Turkey this week by Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Vershinin for talks on the situation in Syria.

Alleged Lockerbie bombmaker in U.S. custody

Associated Press
WASHINGTON

A Libyan intelligence official accused of making the bomb that brought down Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988 was in U.S. custody and will face federal charges in Washington, the U.S. Justice Department said.

The arrest of Abu Agela Masud Kheir Al-Marimi is a milestone in the decades-old investigation into the attack that killed 259 people in the air and 11 on the ground. American authorities in December 2020 announced charges against Masud, who was in Libyan custody at the time. Though he is the third Libyan intelligence official charged in the U.S. in connection with the attack, he would be the first to appear in an American courtroom for prosecution.

The New York-bound Pan Am flight exploded over Lockerbie less than an hour after takeoff from London on December 21, 1988.

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ASKUS

Vidya Bala

Q I am 22 and want to invest in mutual funds and other investments. Is it a bad time to invest for the long term as war tensions between Ukraine and Russia continue?
UDAY

A Since you are looking to invest for the long term (which we assume is over 5 years going to as high as 30-40 years up to retirement), you should not worry about the short-term gyrations, triggers by either political tensions or economic crisis. As long as you believe that we are not nearing the end of the world, there is reason to believe that companies will run and generate profits to meet the demand. All that would happen in short-term volatility in the markets. The best way to get over such volatility is to continue to invest and ensure you average through markets ups and downs. Hence, our strong suggestion would be not to wait for the right market. This quote by investment guru Warren Buffett may provide some confidence: 'The future is never clear; you pay a very high price in the stock market for a cheery consensus. Uncertainty actually is the friend of the buyer of long-term values'.

Q I am aged 30 and a State government employee. My gross salary is ₹62,000 p.m.. Of this, ₹2,000 is deducted under KGID and ₹5,777 for NPS. For six years, I have been investing monthly ₹30,000 in stocks for the long term. To help me save and grow my investment, should I continue only with stocks? Should I raise the deduction under KGID?
PUSHPAVATHI D

A We will be unable to comment on whether you need more KGID as it depends on what other policies you may have. Either way, we don't think money back insurance policies are great investment options. If you simply need to save more for retirement it is best done through mutual funds. You have mentioned that you are investing ₹30,000 a month in stock markets. We are not sure if you are using the mutual fund route or stocks route. Our suggestion is to keep it predominantly as mutual fund investment.
Regular SIP in mutual funds and periodic buying in stocks is a good approach. SIP in stocks can backfire. It is best done through mutual funds. If managing the mutual fund portfolio is difficult, simply select a few index funds that invest in Nifty 50, Nifty 500 or Nifty Midcap 150 and invest every month. Also ensure you have other fixed income options outside such as deposits of small finance banks or gilts and State development loans through the RBI Direct Retail platform to have some safe options in your portfolio.

Q I am in my 20s. I need help to begin investing. Are there reliable sites that I can follow?
YOGITA DUA

A It is good to know that you want to learn how to manage your money early on in life. But you need not wait to invest till you learn. You can start investing small sums in simple and good products like PPF and bank deposits. You can then learn a little more about money and investing by reading. Consider books such as *Let's Talk Money* by Monika Halan and *You can be rich too: With Goal Based Investing* (P.V. Subramanyam and M. Pattabiraman) to know the basics of money and financial planning.
You can go to mutual fund websites to know the basics of mutual funds.
Once you understand this a bit, you can then try to read about how stock markets work and how to understand a company's financials and business prospects. Regularly follow business news via business newspapers or their websites. Importantly, do not get too swayed by the 'easy money' talk that you will hear all around you, especially in social media. Listen to audios or videos about stock markets and tips if you must but remember that like any other journey, the financial one also takes time to travel. There are no short cuts that can be sustained.
(The writer is co-founder, Primeinvestor.in)

Send queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.

Opting for deductible in a health insurance plan

While deductible is a great option to bring down the premium, there's a flipside. If you don't have a group health plan, you may be looking at a large out-of-pocket expense during claim settlement

HEALTH COVER

Amit Chhabra

The world we live in continues to turn more unpredictable, especially as we reel from the aftermath of the pandemic.

While COVID-19 might seem to be out of sight for now, there has been an unprecedented rise in new viruses and medical disorders. Consequently, in a world where medical disorders and medical inflation are rising, the vitality of having comprehensive health insurance cannot be stressed enough.

While many would want to go for health insurance to protect themselves and their families, they also seek ways to save more on premium costs.

One of the most popular ways to do so is by relying only on corporate insurance plan and essentially have a premium-free plan. However, there are many reasons why this could be set for failure. Some of them are low sum insured, no coverage for additional family members, no option to customise plan, absence of riders and so on.

Most importantly, corporate cover ceases in case of a job loss or job switch.

Nevertheless, if one has to cut the corners without risking their financial health, the smarter way to do so is to opt for the deductible in your individual health plan.

What is deductible
A deductible is an option in a health insurance policy where the policyholder is required to pay a fixed amount before the coverage kicks in. Let's say you opt for ₹50,000 deductible in your policy and you make a claim of ₹2 lakh. In this case, you need to pay ₹50,000 out of pocket, following which, the insurance company will be liable to pay ₹1.5 lakh.

Since the customer has to pay a fixed out-of-pocket sum, it brings down the premium, thereby making it more affordable.

Co-payment
One might wonder if the deductible is the same as the other out-of-pocket expenditure that brings down the premium in health insurance, known as co-payment. However, they're both different. Co-payment is a fixed percentage or proportion of the claim amount that the policyholder pays out-of-pocket at the time of claim settlement. So, if you have opted for a 10% co-payment clause and make a claim of ₹10 lakh, you'll end up paying ₹1 lakh.

Deductible, on the other hand, is a fixed amount

> While many would want to go for health insurance to protect themselves and families, they also seek ways to save on premium costs

that has to be paid before the coverage starts. So, if you have opted for ₹1 lakh as a deductible, you can make a claim only after this limit is crossed and borne by you.

Exercising deductible
Before you combine two policies, here's what to bear in mind:

1) Always disclose existing policies with the new insurer to avoid rejection of the claim

2) You cannot make a claim for the same medical expense from different insurers

3) It's advisable to use up the group health policy first and claim the remaining excess from your personal health cover

Now, if you have coverage of ₹3 lakh from your employer and you have ₹50,000 deductible in your personal plan, you will pay a lower premium. Especially, if you have a claim-free policy year, this can substantially help you save up on premium.

Alternatively, suppose you only make a smaller claim of under ₹3 lakh. In this case, you still don't pay anything out of pocket and get adequate coverage even as you continue saving on premiums.

Flipside to deductible
While deductible is a great option to bring down the premium, there's also a flipside to it. If you don't have a group health plan, then you may be looking at a large out-of-pocket expense at the time of claim settlement. Also, if you opt for a higher deductible in order to save up on premium, this can turn out to be a disaster as you might have to arrange a large amount, without which, your insurance coverage won't start. In such cases, one may look at opting for co-payment instead, wherein the amount to be borne by the policyholder is proportional and to be paid at the time of claim settlement.

In a nutshell, comprehensive health insurance is no longer an option but an indispensable protection shield in today's day and age. While there are ways to preserve your finances by saving premium, always make sure that you don't go overboard and risk your overall financial health in the process of doing so.

(The author is Head, Health and Travel insurance, Policybazaar)

Financial gold is good option

THINKINVESTOR

Digital gold refers to gold you can buy online from MMTC-PAMP. Financial gold refers to investments in gold ETFs (exchange-traded funds).

Venkatesh Bangaruswamy

Here, we discuss if digital gold is a better investment than financial gold.

Physical vs. financial
Digital gold refers to gold you can buy online from MMTC-PAMP. Your investment is held in virtual form until you decide to sell it back to MMTC-PAMP or redeem it to receive the underlying 24-carat gold. Financial gold refers to investments in gold ETFs (exchange-traded funds).

There are two reasons to buy gold. One, you want to bet on the volatile movements in gold prices. And two, you want to eventually buy gold ornaments for your family. Should you buy digital gold or financial gold to achieve these objectives?

When you redeem digital gold, MMTC-PAMP will levy making charges towards cost of minting the coin in addition to delivery charges. If your objective was to buy gold and convert it into jewellery, financial gold will be cost-effective because transaction cost is lower. In both cases, the jeweller will charge you for making the ornament. So, that is irrelevant to our discussion. What if you want to invest in gold to capture volatile price movements? Financial gold is better because you can easily buy and sell on the NSE through the trading account with your brokerage firm.

If your objective of redeeming digital gold is for the emotional satisfaction of owning the physical gold, then the argument that financial gold is better does not hold water.

But the touch-and-feel aspect of gold should be more for personal effects such as ornaments than for investments. One exception is passion assets – assets that are collectibles and carry investment value because they are rare.

Conclusion
One could draw parallel with wine NFTs (non-fungible tokens) sold by vineyards to argue the benefits of digital gold.

When you want to redeem NFT for wine, Dom Perignon, for instance, will ship the earmarked bottle to your address; like redeeming gold with MMTC-PAMP. But wine NFTs are different in two ways. One, you will consume wine as is, unlike digital gold which will most likely be converted into ornaments. And two, though there are wine exchanges to buy and sell wine with some offering storage facility, wine trading has not caught on in a big way yet.

(The author offers training programme for individuals to manage their personal investments)

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Insurance Company	Plan Name	Maximum Coverage Upto	Annual Premium (Inclusive of GST)
LIC Of India	Tech Term^^^	80	14,122
Aditya Birla Capital	Digishield Plan	85	15,066
Bajaj Allianz	Etouch	99^	12626"
Bharti AXA	Flexi Term Pro	99	12,037
Canara HSBC Life	iSelect Star Term Plan	99	14,905
HDFC Life	C2PL Life Protect	100**	16,207
ICICI Prudential	iProtect Smart	99	17190
India First Life	e-Term Plan	70	10,762
Kotak Life Insurance	Kotak e-Term Plan	75	13,806
Max Life Insurance	Smart Secure Plus	85	14246*
PNB Met Life	Mera Term Plan Plus	80	13,452
SBI Life	eShield Next	100***	17,495
TATA AIA Life	Sampoorn Raksha Supreme	100	14,868
Aegon Life	iTerm Comfort	70	23,946
Edelweiss Tokio	Total Protect Plus	100	11,705

www. LIC of India, www. policybazaar.com
^^^Maximum policy term is 40 years | Claim settlement ratio as per data provided by insurer | *Max life offers additional 5% discount for 1st year for salaried customers | ^ Bajaj whole life is available only on limited pay option | **HDFC whole is available only in limited payterm(Life Protect) & Limited+Single payterm(Income Plus) | ***SBI Life offers discounted premium on their website | ***SBI eShield Next plan whole life is available only in limited pay with above age 45yrs | " Bajaj offers aditional 5% discount on 1st year for salaried customers, ₹500 discount on 1st year premium and 1 % discount on autopay

Health Insurance Premium

For a 30-year-old male, non-smoker, sum insured of ₹10 lakh living in a metro city

Insurer Name	Key Features of Insurers	Plan Names under each Insurer	Premiun Annually
Niva Bupa Health Insurance	Day Care Treatments	Health ReAssure	9,590
	Hospitalization at Home	Health Pulse Enhanced	10,161
	Family Floater option	Health Companion	9,862
	E-consultation	Health Premia	16,436
	Alternate Medicine	Go Active	11,747
Star Health Insurance	Family Floater option	Medi Classic	**11,095**
	Restoration of cover	Star Comprehensive	**11,476**
	Wellness Benefits	Young Star Gold Plan	**8,389**
	Existing Illness cover	Diabetes Safe Plan-B	**19,122**
	Free health checkup	Young Star Silver Plan	**7,133**
Bajaj Allianz General Insurance	Hospital Room Eligibility	Individual Health Guard	**12,212**
	Wellness Benefits		
	Family Floater Option		
	No claim bonus	Bajaj Health Guard - Platinum	**13,569**
DIGIT General Insurance	Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage	Early Cover Option	**8,064**
	Restoration of cover	Super Care Option	**7,616**
	Alternate medicine (AYUSH)	Ultimate Option	**8,393**
TATA AIG	Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage	Medicare	**9,820**
	Day Care Treatments		
	Hospitalization at Home		
	Free health checkup	Medicare Premier	**12,176**

Insurer Name	Key Features of Insurers	Plan Names under each Insurer	Premiun Annually
Royal Sundaram General Insurance	Day Care Treatments	Lifeline supreme	**8,578**
	Hospitalization at Home		
	Hospital Room Eligibility		
	Alternate Medicine		
New India Insurance	Restoration of cover	Mediclaim Policy	**9,416**
	Day Care Treatments		
Oriental Insurance	Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage	Individual Mediclaim Policy	**12,684**
	Day Care Treatments		
	Hospitalization at Home		
SBI General Insurance	Free health checkup	Arogya Supreme	**13,180**
Chola MS General Insurance	Day Care Treatments	Flexi Health	**7,807**
	Hospital Room Eligibility		
	Hospitalization at Home		
	Alternate Medicine		
Edelweiss General Insurance	Day Care Treatments	Edelweiss Health Insurance- Gold (Health 241 Add-on)	10,916
	Hospitalization at Home	Edelweiss Health Insurance Gold	8,733
	Hospital Room Eligibility		
	Alternate Medicine		

Data as on November 19, 2022
Source: www.policybazaar.com | Premium is calculated on the basis of age of insured member, location, Plan type and Sum insured | Health insurance covers medical expenses that arise due to an illness and benefits will be payable subject to the terms and conditions and exclusions of the Policy

SECOND THOUGHTS

World Cup exit leaves Southgate considering England position

After a third shot at a major tournament ended in disappointment, Gareth Southgate wants time to consider his future as England coach. "Whenever I've finished these tournaments I've needed time to make the correct decision because emotionally you go through so many different feelings," he said.

CRYPTIC MESSAGE

Ronaldo says it's time for him to be a 'good advisor'

Portugal star forward Cristiano Ronaldo on Sunday posted a cryptic message on his social media accounts, saying it is time for him to be an 'advisor'. "Thank you, Portugal. Thank you, Qatar. The dream was beautiful while it lasted... now, it's time to be a good advisor and allow each one to draw their own conclusions," he wrote.

HAPPY MEMORIES

Echoes of 2018 World Cup, says French star Giroud

Olivier Giroud admitted that the holder's battling performance in adversity evoked the spirit of its triumphant 2018 run. "This match reminds me of the Belgium game in 2018, even if the scenario is a bit different. We showed superb spirit and worked so hard for each other. It is the same spirit as in 2018."

THE UNDERDOGS

Morocco 'Rocky Balboa of this World Cup', says Regragui

Coach Walid Regragui said Morocco is "the Rocky Balboa of this World Cup." "When you watch Rocky, you want to support Rocky Balboa because of his hard work and commitment. We're becoming the team that everyone loves at this World Cup, because we're showing that if you have that desire and belief, you can achieve."

England makes a fist of it but France has the last laugh

Tchouameni and Giroud's strikes motor *Les Bleus* into the semfinals while the Three Lions are left to rue Kane's preposterous miss from 12 yards out

FIFA WORLD CUP

Ayon Sengupta
DOHA

Oh, yes! Giroud floats in between the English defence to head home France's winner. AP

Oh, no! Kane sends his penalty kick flying into the rafters. REUTERS

The semifinal line-up
December 14: Netherlands vs. Argentina, 00.30 a.m. (Wed)
December 15: Morocco vs. France, 00.30 a.m. (Thu)

The world stood still, all eyes glued on the sphere that had found a will of its own and all the desperate pleas of the English could not bring it down from the celestial orbit it was following.

Haunting miss

Harry Kane had the chance to right the wrongs that England perceived, but the scorer of 53 international goals might now forever be haunted by the one miss that sent England home after a 2-1 defeat to France.

Brazilian Wilton Sampaio, called "a joke" by a former English player and another of the many pundits here, was again corrected by VAR and England had a penalty to restore parity after Oliver Giroud, who after missing a few, had edged France ahead as he normally does.

The English captain had earlier in the night beaten his Tottenham leader from the spot and was looking for an encore, but destiny was about to deal him a cruel hand. Kane, for a moment, forgot this was football and not his beloved cricket. His shot flew high into the stands, much like the sixes of his friend Virat Kohli. (The two are regulars on each other's Instagram feeds.)

But England played here, not stricken by the sight of Kylian Mbappe running in full throttle. It matched the world champion stride for stride and Kyle Walker, the guardian of England's right, lost just one sprint battle this night.

Rasping drive

The Three Lions, however, were a goal down after 17 minutes of play, Aurelien Tchouameni announcing he too is a star with a rasping 25-yard drive that came as a surprise. Jordan Pickford was a second late to dive and the ball hurtled past his extended right arm. The Real Madrid midfielder had started the move with a steal – and no, Bukayo Saka was not fouled – to pass it on to Mbappe stationed on the left, who shuttled it to the right. When Antoine Griezmann played it back to Tchouameni, the English defenders were busy cutting the angles for a pass and not expecting a shot.

England was not broken by this sudden goal that came and Saka found Kane, who turned past Dayot Upamecano to test Lloris from a tight angle.

The French goalkeeper kept scurrying as England fired a barrage of long-rangers. He parried one from Kane and did better to get a fingertip to a rising effort from the young Jude Bellingham. Saka, with his twists and turns, was becoming a nuisance and for Tchouameni this was becoming unbearable.

His hanging leg brought the Arsenal winger down as he again dribbled in from the right flank. No VAR intervention was needed for England to get its penalty but Kane, despite a nervous pause, won this first all-Spurs duel. Walker soon realised that no legs were a match for Mbappe's pace as the French striker jetted past him to play a cross in the middle. But unfortunately, his teammates were not as fast, and the cutback had no takers.

Giroud came close with a volley aimed at the bottom left but Pickford was adept at palming it away. But soon France's all-time leading goal scorer rose above Harry Maguire to smash home a header from a Griezmann floater.

And then the penalty came as Theo Hernandez surged from behind into an explosive Mason Mount and VAR had a hand in changing Sampaio's mind.

The English fans were gleefully waiting to see this game extend into extra-time, but their hopes flew out with the ball that Kane sent soaring into the Al Bayt night sky.

The result: England 1 (Kane 54-pen) lost to France 2 (Tchouameni 17, Giroud 78).

Luck was on our side, says France coach Deschamps

Ayon Sengupta
DOHA

Deschamps. GETTY IMAGES

Didier Deschamps is always immaculately dressed and not a strand of hair is out of place despite him arriving at the press conference after two hours of frantic pacing in the touchlines.

His team had scored two, but England constantly kept up the pressure and Deschamps feels lucky after scrapping through to the World Cup semifinals. "We came up against an excellent team. They were very technical, played with so much intensity. I regret that we gave them chances, such as the penalties we conceded. Luckily for us, they missed the second one," the France manager said.

"But without taking any credit away from my team, we knew how to do things right. We were able to create some dangerous chances before scoring the second. There was actually a brilliant piece of play where Ousmane [Dembele] set up Olivier [Giroud], and [Jordan] Pickford saved splendidly. Our quality was probably not enough to win tonight, but luck was on our side."

Deschamps's France can match Italy (1934, 38), Brazil (58, 62 and 98, 2002), the Netherlands (74, 78), Germany (82, 86, 90) and Argentina (86, 90) to reach back-to-back World Cup finals.

Morocco, its semifinal opponents, however, has united the Arab world by becoming the first team from the region to reach the last four of the World Cups. "Few people can say that they expected Morocco to reach the World Cup semifinals. But, for everything they have done and for all the teams they have faced, for their performances, they've only let in one goal, it's a bit of surprise, but they deserve to be where they are," Deschamps said.

"Now, we'll have to face them. We should always respect our opponents."

Deschamps, who had captained France to World Cup glory in 1998, believes the four teams remaining in the competition deserve their spots and should be proud of their show.

India ends Australia's unbeaten run in 2022 in Super Over finish

AUSTRALIA IN INDIA

P.K. Ajith Kumar
NAVI MUMBAI

Sizzling show: Smriti's 49-ball 79 contained nine fours and four sixes. EMMANUAL YOGINI

'Full house,' said the boards on the gates to the disappointed fans outside the D.Y. Patil Stadium on Sunday evening.

That full house – it could well be the biggest crowd this Indian women's cricket team may have played before at home – was treated to an exhibition of high quality batting in both innings and an incredible finish, too. And the excited, noisy fans – in excess of 45,000 – got more than what they would have imagined: a Super Over as India made 187 for five in reply to Australia's 187 for one. Much to the fans' delight, India won the Super Over to make it 1-1 and ended Australia's unbeaten run this year.

Before the Super Over, 14 were needed in the final over bowled by Megan Schutt. Richa Ghosh (26 not out, 13b, 3x6) played a blistering knock to bring the Indian chase back on track after the dismissal of opener Smriti Mandhana (79, 49b, 9x4, 4x6). A boundary through backward point by Devika Vaidya pushed the contest to a shootout.

The sublime Smriti looked to be on course to take India home until she tried to guide Annabel Sutherland to fine-leg and played on. She added 76 for the first wicket with Shafali Verma (34, 23b, 4x4, 1x6) and 61 with captain Harmanpreet Kaur (21, 22b, 2x4, 1x6).

Smriti and Richa were back in the middle for the Super Over as the Women in Blue scored 20 for one off Heather Graham. Renuka Singh gave away only 16 to give India an unforgettable victory.

Earlier, it was once again Beth Mooney (82 not out, 54b, 13x4) and Tahlia McGrath (70 not out, 51b, 10x4, 1x6) who frustrated the Indian bowlers. The duo had added 100 in the opening game and piled up 158 for the unbroken second wicket this time, a new record for Australia for any wicket. That record did not matter much on this night.

The scores: Australia 187/1 in 20 overs (Alyssa Healy 25, Beth Mooney 82 n.o., Tahlia McGrath 70 n.o.) tied with India 187/5 in 20 overs (Smriti Mandhana 79, Shafali Verma 34, Richa Ghosh 26 n.o., Heather Graham 3/22).

Super Over: India 20/1 bt Australia 16/1.

On target: Giannou's goal proved Blasters' match-winner. NITHIN R.K.

Blasters continue their climb up the ladder

ISL-9

Stan Rayan
KOCHI

Powered by a strong home crowd, Kerala Blasters continued its climb up the ISL ladder, moving from sixth to fourth, after defeating Bengaluru FC 3-2 here on Sunday.

Having won their last four games, Blasters appeared confident, frequently advancing through the right, but it was Bengaluru which took the lead in the 14th through a penalty after captain Sunil Chhetri was brought down by goalkeeper Prabhsukhan Gill.

Ten minutes later, Blasters found the equaliser following an Adrian Luna free kick from outside the box. As the ball rebounded off the left post, Sandeep Singh sent a cross from the right and an alert Mark Leskovic tapped home.

Blasters took the lead just before the break. Adrian Luna crept up through the left and sent a smart cross into the box.

Bengaluru defender Sandesh Jhingan's attempt to stop it was unsuccessful and Blasters' Greek forward Diamantakos Dimitrios slammed it home.

In the 68th minute, Australian midfielder Apostolos Giannou came off the bench and almost immediately increased Blasters' lead after being put through by Diamantakos.

With a defender chasing him, Giannou ran in, evaded goalkeeper Gurpreet and scored. Bengaluru's Javier reduced the margin with a fiery shot 10 minutes from the end but the Blasters stayed strong to win their fifth straight game.

The result: Kerala Blasters 3 (Leskovic 25, Diamantakos 43, Giannou 70) bt BFC 2 (Chhetri 14-pen, Hernandez 81).

Sangita Kumari.

Indian women get the better of Chile in Nations Cup

Press Trust of India
VALENCIA

India began its campaign in the FIH Women's Hockey Nations Cup with an emphatic 3-1 win over Chile in a Pool B match here on Sunday.

Sangita Kumari opened the scoring for India with a second-minute strike before Sonika and Navneet Kaur added their names to the score sheet in the 10th and 31st minutes respectively.

Fernanda Villagran pulled one back for Chile through a penalty corner conversion in the 43rd minute.

All the three Indian goals came from field efforts.

India plays Japan on Monday and then South Africa in its concluding league match on December 14.

INBRIEF

Akhil wins drivers' crown, Godspeed takes team title

Akhil Rabindra won the drivers' title in the inaugural Indian Racing League (IRL) which concluded at the Hyderabad Street Circuit on Sunday. Neel Jani finished second. Godspeed Kochi topped the team charts followed by Hyderabad Blackbirds.

Axelsen and Yamaguchi emerge king and queen

Men's World No. 1 Viktor Axelsen claimed his eighth title in 2022, drubbing Indonesian ace Anthony Ginting 21-13, 21-14 at the World Tour Finals here on Sunday. Reigning World champion Akane Yamaguchi of Japan defeated Taiwan's Tai Tzu Ying 21-18, 22-20 to claim the women's singles crown.

Other results: Men's doubles: Liu Yuchen & Ou Xuanyi (Chn) Mohammad Ahsan & Hendra Setiawan (Ina) 21-17, 19-21, 21-12; **Women's doubles:** Chen Qingchen & Jia Yifan (Chn) bt Benyapa & Nuntakarn Aimsaard (Tha) 21-13, 21-14; **Mixed doubles:** Zheng Siwei & Huang Yaqiong (Chn) bt Dechapol Puavaranukroh & Sapsiree Taerattanachai (Tha) 21-19, 18-21, 21-13.

Team MRF Tyres, Llarena and Fernandez win ERC awards

Team MRF Tyres received the European Rally Championship 2022 award at the FIA prize distribution gala in Bologna on Saturday. Arun Mammen, Vice-Chairman and Managing Director of MRF Ltd., received the team award, while Efren Llarena received the winning driver and Sara Fernandez the co-driver titles. Javier Pardo was drivers' runner-up.

Australia sweeps Windies Test series with big win

Australia completed a series sweep with a lopsided 419-run victory in the day-night Test at the Adelaide Oval on Sunday. Pace bowlers Mitchell Starc, Scott Boland and Michael Neser snared three wickets apiece as the West Indies was bundled out for 77 chasing an unlikely 497 to win. West Indies resumed Day 4 on 38 for four with Devon Thomas and Jason Holder each on 8, still needing 459 for an unlikely win with six wickets in hand and six sessions remaining. It was all over in the opening session, with the tourists losing six wickets for 39 runs. Australia had won the first Test in Perth by 164 runs and was even more convincing in the second here. at the Adelaide Oval where it remains unbeaten in day-night Tests. Travis Head was Player-of-the-Match for his 175 in the first innings and Marnus Labuschagne, who scored 163 here and a double-century and a century in Perth last week, was Player-of-the-Series.

The scores: Australia 511/7 decl. & 199/6 decl. bt West Indies 214 & 77 in 40.5 oves (Mitchell Starc 3/29, Michael Neser 3/22, Scott Boland 3/16).

Henderson decides to quit as CA chief, Baird to replace him

Former New South Wales Premier Mike Baird will take over as Cricket Australia chairman after Lachlan Henderson decided to step down on Sunday due to "work commitments". Board member Baird has received unanimous endorsement from fellow CA directors and State chairs to take over next February.

LIVE TELECAST

Pakistan vs England: 2nd Test, day 4, Sony LIV, 10.30 a.m.
I-League: Eurosport (SD & HD), 2 & 7 p.m.

Ishan Kishan — India's pocket-sized dynamite

The southpaw has raised expectations after smashing the fastest ODI double hundred and grabbing the opportunity that came his way in the third match on Saturday

CRICKET

Agence France-Presse
NEW DELHI

Ishan Kishan has raised expectations that India can turn around its flagging white-ball fortunes after the baby-faced assassin blasted the world's fastest ODI double century and said he could have reached 300.

But, on Saturday, Kishan, 24, gave India something to cheer about, with the diminutive left-handed opener smashing a 131-ball 210 laced with 24 fours and 10 sixes against Bangladesh in Chattogram.

Kishan only played because skipper Rohit Sharma was injured but he grabbed the opportunity with both hands by producing a 290-run second-wicket stand with Virat Kohli to power India to 409 for eight.

Wind in his sails: Kishan's blistering knock has given India direction in white-ball cricket. AP

"The innings you played today deserves double the appreciation too," Sachin Tendulkar wrote on *Twitter*.

V.V.S. Laxman tweeted: "What a phenomenal display of ball-striking... To get a double hundred in any format is awesome, to do so inside 35 overs is just mind-boggling!"

About his innings, Kishan said: "When I got out, 15 overs were left. That's 90 balls. If you play 45 balls, it's easy to get another hundred when you are that set," Kishan said after India's 227-run win.

"Bowlers are under pressure. I was in the zone to get 300, but unfortunately I didn't. But it was a special one to get my name up there with so many legend players."

Injured Rohit ruled out of opening Test

Sports Bureau
BENGALURU

Rohit Sharma has been ruled out of the first Test against Bangladesh starting Wednesday in Chattogram after failing to sufficiently recover from the left thumb injury he sustained in the second ODI.

"He [Rohit] has been advised appropriate management for this injury and will not be available for the first Test against Bangladesh.

"The BCCI Medical Team will take a call on his availability for the second and final Test at a later stage," a BCCI media release stated.

Rohit. FILE PHOTO

The replacements

With Mohammed Shami and Ravindra Jadeja yet to fully recover from their respective shoulder and knee injuries, the selectors have named Navdeep Saini and Saurabh Kumar as replacements.

The squad: K.L. Rahul (Capt.), Shubman Gill, Cheteshwar Pujara, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, Rishabh Pant, K.S. Bharat, R. Ashwin, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Shardul Thakur, Mohd. Siraj, Umesh Yadav, Abhimanyu Easwaran, Navdeep Saini, Saurabh Kumar, and Jaydev Unadkat.

Imam, Shakeel keep Pakistan in the hunt

Guiding hand: Imam scored a crucial half-century. REUTERS

ENGLAND IN PAKISTAN

Reuters
MULTAN

Imam-ul-Haq and Saud Shakeel struck defiant half-centuries to keep Pakistan in the hunt but England maintained the upper hand in the action-packed second Test in Multan on Sunday. Pakistan bowled out England for 275 but its 355-run target meant it needed to pull off a record chase on home soil to level the series.

The see-saw contest changed complexion in the final session again following a 108-run partnership between Imam (60) and Saud (54 batting). Pakistan finished day three on 198 for four, still needing 157.

The scores: England 281 & 275 (Brook 108, Duckett 79, Stokes 41, Abrar 4/120, Zahid 3/52) vs Pakistan 202 & 198/4 in 64 overs (Imam 60, Shafique 45, Saud batting 54).

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Yashaswini bags doubles bronze

Yashaswini Ghorpade, in partnership with Suhana Saini, secured a bronze medal at the ITTF World Youth Championship (Tunisia). The Indian pair was beaten in the semifinals by Japan's Miwa Harimoto and Miyuu Kihara 14-16, 4-11, 6-11. Earlier, at the WTT Youth Star Contender (Portugal) Yashaswini and Saini bagged silver after losing in the final to the Chinese Taipei duo of Tsai Yun-En and Huang Yu Jie 7-11, 11-13, 7-11.

Creditable: Yashaswini gave a good account of herself at the ITTF World Youth Championship. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Kebere and Chepkoech takes the honours

Ethiopia's Abdu Kebere and Kenya's Emmy Chepkoech won the men's and women's open category titles respectively at the Bengaluru Midnight Marathon.

While Kebere secured the gold in 2:24:33s, Chepkoech went past the finish line in 3:02.03s. In the Indian category, Bhupendra Sahu came first among men with a timing of 2:55:57s.

Ryan International posts win

Ryan International defeated BGS National Public School 3-1 in the Parikrma Champions League football tournament on Sunday.

Other results: TSWREIS Hyderabad bt Govt. HPS, Pottery Road 11-0; Parikrma Center for Learning bt Legacy School Bangalore 3-0; DPS, North bt Headstart Education Academy 4-0; Zamorin's HSS, Kerala bt St. Aloysius BHS 8-0; Loyola High School Goa bt Vidya Niketan 4-0; Inventure Academy bt TISB 5-3 [on penalties, 1-1 at full-time].

Deshna, Atharva reign

Deshna M. Vanshika bagged the under-17 girls' title and Atharva Nawarange the under-15 boys' trophy at the CVL Shastry Memorial Karnataka State TT Championship here on Sunday.

The results: U-17: Girls: Deshna M. Vanshika bt Sahana H.Murthy 11-9, 11-4, 4-11, 8-11, 11-4, 11-6; **U-15: Boys:** Atharva Nawarange bt Siddhant Vasan 9-11, 11-5, 11-5, 11-8, 11-6.

It's Alchemy Intl vs. Vickey

Alchemy Intl FA will take on Vickey FA in the under-9 category final of the KSFA Youth Premier League.

The results:

U-15: The Sports School bt GRK FA 10-0; Stadium FC bt IFEP 2-1; YBEFC bt BIFA 3-0; BCFC bt Nakshatra FA 5-1; Raman SA bt Sportshood FA 6-0; The Sports School bt Bangalore Champs 10-0; Smart FC bt Titan FA 2-1; Black Panthers bt BSSSS 6-0.

U-13: YBEFC bt BYFL 4-0; Kickstart FC bt Conscient FB 7-0.

U-9 (semifinals): Alchemy Intl FA bt JSW BFC 3-2 [on penalties, 1-1 at full-time]; Vickey FA bt BSSSS 1-0.

Former sprint champion Kenneth Powell passes away

GENERAL

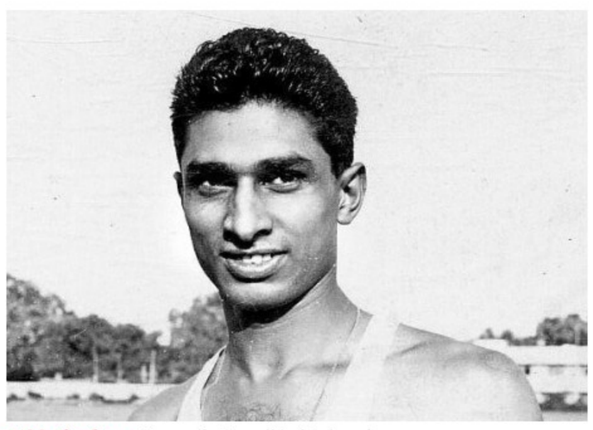
Sports Bureau
BENGALURU

Former National sprint champion, Olympian and Asian Games medallist Kenneth Powell passed away here on Sunday. He was 82.

Popularly known as 'Gentleman Sprinter', a tribute to his pleasant demeanour, soft-spoken nature and glowing smile, Powell participated in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics in 100m and 4x100m relay. The legendary Milkha Singh was also at the event, running the 4x400m relay.

Powell's career-high was at the 1970 Asian Games in Bangkok, where he was part of the 4x100m relay bronze-medal winning team.

Born on April 20, 1940 in an Anglo-Indian family in Kolar, Powell dabbled in cricket for a while, before taking to serious athletics at 19 when he moved to Bengaluru to work with the Indian Telephone Industries.



Athletics icon: Kenneth Powell in his heyday. THE HINDU ARCHIVES

At the inaugural National Inter-State athletics championships in Allahabad in February 1963, Powell secured the sprint double, winning the 100m in 10.8s and 200m in 22.0s. In 1965, he set a new National record in 100m, coming home in 10.4s in Pune. He was presented with the Arjuna Award in 1965.

Even after giving up competitive athletics, he remained active, staying true to his community's sporting heritage, trying out handball and being a regular on the Masters Athletics circuit.

He also lent his support to many a cause, participating in protest meetings, along with the late N. Lingappa, a fellow doyen, to pressure the authorities to give primacy to athletics at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium.

The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) condoled Powell's death. "Indian athletics grew in stature back in the 60s because of the efforts of athletes like Kenny Powell," said AFI president Adille J. Sumariwalla.

Warner's lifetime leadership ban wrong: Steve Smith

Press Trust of India
ADELAIDE

Australia's stand-in skipper Steve Smith has termed David Warner's lifetime leadership ban as "fundamentally wrong" and hopes the star opener regains his form after a week of "distraction" that saw him giving up on his captaincy ambitions for good.

Warner on Wednesday withdrew the bid to overturn his lifetime captaincy ban, saying the review panel wanted him to go through "public lynching" and he was not prepared to let his family be the "washing machine for cricket's dirty laundry".

"From my point of view, banning for life from leadership is just fundamentally wrong," said Smith. "David served his time like I did. We know he's a leader around the group, and on and off the field he's doing a tremendous job. It's been a difficult one for him, it's been a difficult week."

Sreenidi and Aizawl in a thrilling draw

In control: Castaneda (11) led Sreenidi Deccan well with two goals. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

I-LEAGUE

Sports Bureau
HYDERABAD

Sreenidi Deccan FC and Aizawl FC fought to a 3-3 draw in the Hero I-League on Sunday.

Captain David Castaneda scored two goals for Deccan while Songpu Singsit scored the third.

Sreenidi took an early lead through Castaneda as he finished clinically from the edge of the box. Aizawl hit back three minutes later through Ramdinthara Tharpuia who headed in a rebound.

The visitors went ahead in the 29th minute as Ugandan forward Henry Kisekka got on the end of a low cross.

But Castaneda drew Deccan level just before half-time.

Songpu Singsit scored from close range in second half added time.

Aizawl's Nigerian defender Emmanuel Olugbenga Makinde found the equaliser at the very end of the match.

The result: Sreenidi Deccan FC 3 (David Castaneda 5, 43, Songpu Singsit 90+3) drew with Aizawl FC 3 (Ramdinthara Tharpuia 8, Henry Kisekka 29, Emmanuel Olugbenga Makinde 90+11).